

THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

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KANTIANISM AND THE MODERN MIND

A Symposium — Part 1

KANTIANISM: FAITH VERSUS KNOWLEDGE

Edmund H. Ziegelmeyer

HEGELIAN DIALECTIC AND POST-KANTIAN IDEALISM

Vernon J. Bourke

MARXISM: THE BIRTH OF A PREJUDICE

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OF HISTORY AS A CALCULUS
WHOSE TERM IS SCIENCE

Bernard J. Muller-Thym

Book Reviews

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CONTENTS

KANTIANISM AND THE MODERN MIND - - - - -	<i>Editorial</i>	61
KANTIANISM: FAITH VERSUS KNOWLEDGE - - - - -	<i>Edmund H. Ziegelmeyer</i>	61
HELEGIAN DIALECTIC AND POST-KANTIAN IDEALISM - - - - -	<i>Vernon J. Bourke</i>	66
MARXISM: THE BIRTH OF A PREJUDICE - - - - -	<i>Charles J. McFadden</i>	70
OF HISTORY AS A CALCULUS WHOSE TERM IS SCIENCE (<i>concl.</i>) - - -	<i>Bernard J. Muller-Thym</i>	73
BOOK REVIEWS - - - - -		77

BOOK REVIEWS

<i>Summa Theologiae</i> , Volume I.....Saint Thomas Aquinas	<i>The Eighteenth Century Background</i>Basil Willey
<i>A Companion to the Summa: I. The Architect of the Universe</i>Walter Farrell, O.P.	<i>Philodemus: On Methods of Inference</i>Philip Howard De Lacy Estelle Allen DeLacy
<i>Plato's Earlier Dialectic</i>Richard Robinson	<i>Prefaces to Inquiry</i>William Richard Gordin
<i>The Psychology of Aristotle</i>Clarence Shute	<i>Philosophy of Christian Education</i>Western Division of Catholic Philosophical Association
<i>Theism and Cosmology</i>John Laird	
<i>The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead</i>Paul Arthur Schilpp	

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THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

A Quarterly Journal of Philosophy

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Kantianism and the Modern Mind

An Introduction

KANT must have known when he published his *Critiques* that he was tossing some mighty large pebbles into the sea of Philosophy. But quite possibly not even Kant himself fully realized what tremendous waves those ripples he was stirring up would in time become. Be that as it may, he has certainly exerted great influence in philosophy — so great, in fact, that one cannot hope thoroughly to understand even contemporary philosophical systems unless one first sees their place in the Kantian cycle. Thus Bergsonism, Pragmatism, or Marxian Materialism will be quite unintelligible unless seen as a reaction to or a development of systems which ultimately sprang from the idealism and moralism of Immanuel Kant.

The present series of article, then, is an introductory study of Kantianism, its idealistic development in Hegel, and the various reactionary movements which followed. Obviously in the limited scope of a journal an exhaustive analysis and criticism is quite impossible. Nor is such a detailed study necessary for our purposes. Rather we have endeavored to set forth briefly the fundamental principles of the more important philosophers in the Kantian cycle so that we may go to the writings of those men better prepared to read and analyze for ourselves their philosophical doctrines in the light of their first principles.

More, however, can be gained from the history of ideas than mere objective and critical acquaintance with some particular philosopher. The present study, it is hoped, will deepen our realization that true philosophy is an enquiry into the ultimate causes and reasons of things, that one can never solve metaphysical problems by substituting the basic concepts of some particular science for the more universal ones of metaphysics, that thought is not the measure of reality, but reality of thought. And so the true philosopher does not seek to formulate a *system* ". . . but to relate reality, as we know it, to the permanent principles in whose light all the changing problems of science, of ethics and of art have to be resolved."* The true metaphysician, then, must ever be re-examining first principles in their application to current problematical contingencies.

If we begin to see the importance of a knowledge of first principles, and if especially we come to order our study as Professor Gilson would, then our series will not have been without profit. For to Gilson the truly philosophical history of philosophy enjoys a marvelous privilege: in its light, not only philosophical truth, but even philosophical error becomes intelligible. And, we must remember, to understand error as error is also to be free from it.

Kantianism: Faith versus Knowledge

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I *Pure Reason*

DURING the past century and a half the transcendental idealist of Königsberg has been accused of every possible heresy in philosophy. He has destroyed, we are told, all science, or at least all Metaphysics; he has denied the existence of the outside world, of the Ego and its immortality, of God Himself. While there is some justification for all these accusations, it is not our intention to formulate them once again. On the contrary, it should become clear in the course of this article that although Kant made it impossible for our *theoretical* reason to *prove* the existence of these three objects, he made it equally impossible for it to *disprove* them. In fact,

he went further: if the existence of these three objects is guaranteed from some other source than this pure (theoretical) reason, the latter has nothing else to do but acquiesce and cease to kick against the goad. While we cannot have *knowledge* of these three objects, we must nevertheless *believe* in their existence. Kant had a formula for this:

I have therefore found it necessary to deny *knowledge*, in order to make room for *faith*.¹

It is precisely this point which I intend to examine in the present article. I hope to show that *if it is impossible to have scientific knowledge of these objects*, a fortiori *it is impossible to believe in them*. In other words, if our speculative reason cannot attain to certitude in regard to these three objects, then

*Etienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 317. One should read Gilson's entire treatment of the Kantian cycle (pp. 221-320); see especially the remarkable closing chapter.

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan and Co., 1929), Preface to 2d ed., B xxx (p. 29).

neither can our *practical* reason. And thus we have cut off every possible way of assuring ourselves that we have a soul or that there is a God.

To fulfill our aim satisfactorily, it would be necessary to examine Kant's first two *Critiques* carefully,—obviously an impossibility in a single article. Nevertheless, we hope to be able to set down the cardinal ideas of both *Critiques* and to present in all their cogency Kant's strictures against knowledge, especially of the Self and of God, and his defense of faith in these objects. Let us begin with the *Critique of Pure Reason*. To spare the reader the uninviting task of struggling through just one more account of Kant's devious thought, we have tried to summarize its sum and substance under five headings.

1. The Kantian Method

How can Kant's method better be described than as an inquiry into the act of knowing—a metaphysics, as it were, of the knowing subject? So true is this that Kant himself considered the so-called Copernican Revolution in epistemology as the very essence of his method. He tells us in the *Preface* to the second edition of the first *Critique* that Mathematics and the Natural Sciences "by a single and sudden revolution have become what they now are";² they have developed by insisting on the *subjective* rather than the *objective*. Then Kant asks an important question: Would not this revolution be also possible in Metaphysics? In that frame of mind he urges us to make "trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of Metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge."³ A moment later, we read that the main purpose of the *Critique* is to attempt such an alteration in metaphysical procedure.⁴ In that step, Kant has crossed his Rubicon, and Kantianism is about to see the light of day.

2. The Nature of Knowledge

Although Kant has often been accused of Scepticism, and although his principles may logically lead to this mental bankruptcy, he certainly did not intend to commit intellectual suicide. In fact, he starts out with the dogmatic assumption that there are sciences, at least Mathematics and what we now call Physics, and these, he reports, have been advancing steadily. Furthermore, and in this Kant is typically Kantian, he assumes there is another source of knowledge besides the object, a source which is prior to all experience; this source is the mind itself.

But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience. For it may well be that even our empirical knowledge is made up of what we receive through impressions and of what our own faculty of knowledge (sensible impressions serving merely as the occasion) supplies from itself.⁵

In plain language, Kant's fundamental presupposition about the nature of scientific knowledge is that our own mind contributes an important element, and his whole subsequent *Critique* endeavors to justify this assumption by showing just what this element is and the rôle it plays in our knowledge. From this it quite logically follows that knowing is not merely an assimilative process, but rather a *creative activity*. The mind does not merely conform itself to the object that is to be known; it puts something into the object; it gives the congeries of data their intelligibility. Using the Aristotelian doctrine of Matter and Form as an analogy, we might say that

the object known is composed of matter and form, the matter being derived from the impressions of the senses, and the form being contributed by the knowing mind.⁶ In the course of our inquiry we shall see how important this point is for understanding the critical philosophy.

3. Synthetic a priori Judgments

Kant began his philosophical career by subscribing wholeheartedly to Cartesian Rationalism, as it had come down to him in the works of Leibniz and Wolff. Gradually, however, he came to see that such Rationalism was not enough to safeguard scientific knowledge. While it is true that it accounts for the necessity and universality of knowledge, such Rationalism cannot account for the newness and reality, which are equally requisite for knowledge worthy of the name. He turned then to British Empiricism, only to find it also was one-sided in that it guaranteed the newness and reality, but forfeited necessity and universality. Then the light dawned upon him of combining these two types; their "legitimate marriage" would furnish all the elements which truly scientific knowledge should possess.

Now Rationalism abounds in purely analytic judgments.⁷ Empiricism, on the other hand, makes use of purely *synthetic* judgments.⁸ Combine the two and we obtain the kind of judgment which guarantees scientific knowledge, the *synthetic a priori* judgment. Now it is precisely because Mathematics and the Natural sciences contain such judgments that they can be called sciences in the strict sense of the term. Metaphysics, too, urgently claims that it is a science, but where are its *synthetic a priori* judgments? Nowhere to be found, I am afraid, and so the conclusion forces itself upon us that Metaphysics, at least in the ordinary acceptance of the word, must be denied the name of *science*. True enough, Kant does not affirm this in so many words, but his meaning is manifest. Indeed, the whole first *Critique* may be said to be directed towards showing just why Metaphysics, as a science, is impossible.

4. Metaphysics, as a Science, is not possible.

Moreover, science strictly so-called requires a combination of concept and intuition, for "Concepts," he states repeatedly, "without intuitions are empty, and intuitions without concepts are blind." By this Kant means that concepts, taken alone, are mere molds or subjective forms devoid of all content; whereas intuitions of themselves are simply brute phenomena, without form or order, a mere sense manifold, chaotic congeries. Hence, neither concepts nor intuitions alone will suffice. For knowledge we need both mold and content, both form and matter, and from both combined there will be produced an "object" in the strictest meaning of the word, and such an "object" as to be universally valid. It will hold for all knowing subjects, since these latter will all apply the mental (*a priori*) "form" in the same way, and this necessarily,

⁶ A. Naber, *Theoria Cognitionis Critica* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1932), pp. 340-341.

⁷ Kant, *op. cit.*, *Intro.*, A 7 and B 11 (p. 48): "Analytic judgments (affirmative) are therefore those in which the connection of the predicate with the subject is thought through identity; . . . [These], as adding nothing through the predicate to the concept of the subject, but merely breaking it up into those constituent concepts that have all along been thought in it, although confusedly, can also be entitled explicative . . ."

⁸ *Ibid.* [Synthetic judgments] " . . . add to the concept of the subject a predicate which has not been in any wise thought in it, and which no analysis could possibly extract from it; and they may therefore be entitled ampliative."

² *Ibid.*, B xvi (pp. 21-22).

³ *Ibid.*, B xvi (p. 22).

⁴ *Ibid.*, B xxii (p. 25).

⁵ *Ibid.*, *Intro.*, B 1 (pp. 41-42).

simply because the human intellect functions in the same way in all men.

Once we grant Kant's presupposition that intuition is a necessary element in science, and that only our senses enjoy this power of intuition, it quite obviously follows that Metaphysics cannot be a science. For the avowed object of Metaphysics is "*das Ding an sich*," the thing in itself, which can never be reached by sense intuition. Quite plainly, our knowledge is of things as they appear, things as they are clothed with the conditions of our sensibility; consequently, we know *phenomenon*; and this *phenomenon*, technically understood, is something subjective, something that has been produced by the knowing subject through the combination of sense intuition and an intellectual form. Hence Metaphysics which would get at the *noumenon* (the thing in itself) is doomed to failure. This negative conclusion with regard to "die vermeintliche Metaphysik" may perhaps be called the *raison d'être* of Kant's first *Critique*.

The failure of metaphysics and the success of the sciences is a contrast between the failure of reason where it would appear most naturally to be at home, and its success in what seems at first sight a field alien to it. This examination of the secret of the success of the sciences and the failure of metaphysics is an examination—or, to use Kant's word, a criticism or critique—of pure reason.⁹

And with Metaphysics thus rendered quite useless and sterile, it is not surprising that *the impossibility of pure reason's establishing the existence of the human soul and of God Himself follows as a necessary consequence*.¹⁰

5. Metaphysics, as a natural disposition, is possible.

We must not think, however, that the first *Critique* ends in pure negation and the unqualified rejection of all Metaphysics. For there is still room, Kant goes on to show, for a "Metaphysics," namely, that which will teach the human mind its own limitations. It is the purpose of such Metaphysics to restrain our pure reason, to keep it from attempting to get at *transcendent* objects, and to limit its application to the *transcendental*.¹¹ Man, in the Kantian world, is impelled by a kind of natural necessity to group all that he knows around three "focal points": the substantial *Ego*, as the synthesis of all internal experience; the *corporeal world*, as the synthesis of all external experience; and *God*, as the ultimate and unconditioned "ratio sufficiens" of all things. These syntheses, however, are not realities; they are only a priori forms in our *reason* in much the same way as the concepts are for our understanding—forms unifying, not the phenomena of our experience, but our experience itself. And although he calls them "ideas," they are not innate nor are they objects of our knowledge. What is more, they have no objective or constitutive value; they are purely *regulative*, playing here the same

rôle as hypotheses do in the sciences, that of unifying and systematizing the data of experience. Similarly, these three "ideas" lead us ever on towards greater progress in our quest for a synthetic explanation of our experience.

But, alas! such a synthesis, however consoling it would be, can never be realized. These ideas, like a kind of *ignis fatuus*, lead us on, and yet, the objects which correspond to these ideas will ever remain unknown to us. We may be able to think of them, but further than that we cannot go with our *speculative* reason. Still the picture is not entirely black. True enough, no genuine scientific knowledge of the objects of the ideas is possible; but one compensation is had: our pure reason cannot absolutely deny their existence. Indeed, if there is some other faculty which can establish these objects, all well and good. Pure reason must cease to argue against them; it must yield the field. That, briefly, is the meaning of Kant's dictum

I have therefore found it necessary to deny *knowledge*, in order to make room for *faith*.¹²

* * * *

By way of summary, our inquiry seems to have led to some such conclusions: 1) Metaphysics, since its conclusions are not *synthetic a priori* judgments, is not a science. It fails further to offer valid knowledge since its object, the *noumenon*, the thing in itself, can never be reached by sense intuition. 2) Consequently, pure reason can offer no rational proof for the existence of the human soul or of God. 3) Metaphysics, in virtue of the a priori forms of reason, necessarily works towards a synthesis, which is as illusory as it is inevitable.

II Practical Reason

All that we have said up to now has been predominantly negative in character: one has to be negative when investigating Kant's first *Critique*. The most important phase of Kant's thought, however, belongs rather to the second *Critique*, that of the *Practical Reason*. As Lindsay puts it:

The primacy of the practical reason is Kant's most essential doctrine. He will have nothing to do with reality except in terms of our action upon it.¹³

Although the practical reason is of vital importance in Kant's thought, one will look in vain for its precise definition. Strangely enough, the idealist never tells us. He seems, however, to identify it with what the Scholastics call the "will," though at times he attributes to it a kind of knowledge.¹⁴ But we have an even more important question to ask: How does Kant use this *practical reason* to correct the negative conclusions of his first *Critique*? Here again, we can select only the salient ideas of Kant's argument.

To begin with, the very essence of Kant's ethical teaching is his doctrine of *obligation*. Man feels obliged to subject himself to law. This Kant accepts as a fact which cannot be gainsaid or even explained; we are "directly conscious" of the moral law, and such consciousness is simply given in our experience. What is more, this feeling of obligation is not a mere desire or impulse, not an uncertain, hypothetical thing; rather it is something absolute and ineluctable. It is,

⁹ A. D. Lindsay, *Kant* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1934), p. 45.

¹⁰ Kant's arguments that the real self is unknown: Kant, *op. cit.*, B 155; cf. Mary Whiton Calkins, *The Persistent Problems of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1936), p. 242.

If the transcendental self was known, it would be both subject and object; that is impossible: Kant, *op. cit.*, esp. B 404 sqq.; cf. Calkins, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

The soul is not a substance; nor can we prove its simplicity or immortality: Kant, *op. cit.*, B 413 (p. 372).

Proofs of God do not conclude: *Ibid.*, A 603, B 658 (p. 524).

¹¹ We are using "transcendent" and "transcendental" according to Kant's predominant usage. Confer Richard Falckenberg, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, (Leipzig: Veit & Co., 1913), p. 315n. "By transcendental Kant understands the knowledge (either the discovery or the confirmation) of the a priori and its relation to objects of experience. Unfortunately, he uses this same word often enough not merely to designate the a priori itself, but as a synonym for transcendent." (My translation.)

¹² Kant, *op. cit.*, B xxx (p. 29).

See Friedrich Paulsen's exposition in *Immanuel Kant*, transl. J. E. Creighton and Albert Lefevre (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), pp. 5-6.

¹³ Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

¹⁴ Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 166. This is also Falckenberg's interpretation: "Will and practical reason are identical. We may define will as the power (faculty) to act according to our knowledge of the law." Richard Falckenberg, *Geschichte der neuen Philosophie* (Leipzig: Veit & Co., 1913), p. 357n (My translation).

as Kant is so fond of calling it, a *categorical imperative* binding us to observe the moral law with inescapable necessity. This obligation, moreover, is purely formal in that it expresses merely the fact of our being obliged, without determining or specifying just what this imperative obliges us to perform.

Let us not delay to quarrel with Kant on this score, or to suggest the obvious difficulties which militate against the possibility of admitting such obligation. Grant Kant this datum of experience; then he can proceed to argue that this very consciousness of obligation implies the *existence of a Self* which is free.¹⁵ For this feeling of obligation can be accounted for by no preceding succession of facts either in my mental life or in my experience of the outer world. Consequently, the only satisfactory answer is that this feeling of absolute obligation or categorical imperative derives from a *Self* which is conscious of this obligation. And this, although Kant argued at length in the first *Critique* that the true *Self* is unknowable.¹⁶

The *Self* has, to Kant's satisfaction, been proved to exist. Now comes the vindication of two main characteristics of this *Self*, characteristics, our reader will remember, which he forbade pure reason to try to establish. The first of these characteristics is *freedom*, which Kant deduces all too easily from this very feeling of obligation. The mere fact that man feels he *ought* to observe the moral law enables him to affirm that he *can* observe it: "Du kannst, denn du sollst." However useful it might be to know what such "freedom" means, it avails naught to ask Kant himself. Nowhere does he define it.¹⁷

The second attribute of the *Self* which Kant rather naïvely vindicates is its immortality. Since *complete conformity* with the moral law is required of man, and this complete conformity is the same as *holiness*, a rational being is quite incapable of attaining such perfection at any moment of his existence. He needs an eternity. What, then, can be more obvious than that man will *be* forever?¹⁸ Next in order come his arguments for the existence of a "*Summum Bonum*," which consists of two elements: Morality, "which can be perfectly solved only in eternity";¹⁹ and Happiness, which is proportioned to that morality, and this on grounds as disinterested as before, and solely from impartial reason; . . . in other words, it must postulate the *existence of God*, as the necessary condition of the possibility of the *summum bonum*.²⁰

It is, we believe, neither necessary nor opportune to discuss Kant's reasoning here. Our only concern at present is to convince ourselves that Kant reaches the climax of his second *Critique* by *postulating the existence of God*; but is Kant, in the light of what he previously said justified in laying down

¹⁵ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, transl. Thomas K. Abbott (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1927), p. 119.

¹⁶ Calkins, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

¹⁷ Lindsay's interpretation is quite good: "Freedom then for Kant is not a freedom of indifference; it is not indeterminism. For man is only undetermined by circumstances because and in so far as he is determined by the moral law. On the other hand, the moral law is binding upon man because it is his own law; it is what he wills in so far as he is a personality." Lindsay, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-194.

¹⁸ "Since, nevertheless, it is required as practically necessary, it can only be found in a *progress in infinitum* towards that perfect accordance, and on the principles of pure practical reason it is necessary to assume such a practical progress as the real object of our will.

"Now, this endless progress is only possible on the supposition of an *endless* duration of the *existence* and personality of the same rational being (which is called the immortality of the soul). The *summum bonum*, then, practically is only possible on the supposition of the immortality of the soul." Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 218.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-221.

this postulate? A very interesting question, is it not? Let us, however, allow this challenge to pass for the nonce and simply take Kant's word for it:

It was seen to be a duty for us to promote the *summum bonum*; consequently, it is not merely allowable, but it is a necessity connected with duty as a requisite, that we should presuppose the possibility of this *summum bonum*; and as this is possible only on condition of the existence of God, it inseparably connects the supposition of this with duty; that is, it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God.²¹

Such then is the line of reasoning with which Kant seeks to salvage the existence of the *Self*, its freedom and immortality, and finally the existence of God, after he has made it impossible for pure reason to *prove* or *disprove* any of these. Now we approach the final consideration. It is our hope that the remarks, which we set down, will prove to be, if not adequate, at least provocative of further study and thought.

III Did Kant Save Faith?

The whole purpose, we will recall, of this discussion has been to show that if it is impossible to have any knowledge whatsoever of the existence of the *Self* or of God, it is a *fortiori* impossible to *believe* in their existence.²²

But Kant himself was far from thinking such procedure was illegitimate. Repeatedly he tells us that we must affirm that God exists and that the soul is immortal through "faith." Faith? But what precisely does he mean by "Glaube"? In the first *Critique*, we remember, he wrote:

If our holding of the judgment be only subjectively sufficient, and is at the same time taken as being objectively insufficient, we have what is termed *believing*. Lastly, when the holding of a thing to be true is sufficient both subjectively and objectively, it is *knowledge*. The subjective sufficiency is termed *conviction* (for myself), the objective sufficiency is termed *certainly* (for everyone).²³

And this agrees with what he says in his second *Critique* about the faith and the belief we accord to the postulates:

It must be remarked here that this moral necessity is *subjective*, that is, it is a want, and not *objective*, that is, itself a duty, for there cannot be a duty to suppose the existence of anything (since this concerns only the theoretical employment of reason).²⁴

Later on in the section which describes the "Belief from a requirement of Pure Reason," we again read:

. . . it is clear that the principle that herein determines our judgment, though as a want it is *subjective*, yet at the same time being the means of promoting what is *objectively* (practically) necessary, is the foundation of a *maxim* of belief in a moral point of view, that is, a *faith of pure practical reason*. This, then, is not commanded, but . . . it has itself sprung from the moral disposition of mind; it may therefore at times waver even in the well disposed, but can never be reduced to unbelief.²⁵

If Kant's words have any meaning, it is this: faith is something irrational, a kind of blind instinct, an irresistible impulse which certainly finds no justification on purely speculative grounds. Obviously, since pure reason has nothing to do with it, such faith cannot be an "obsequium rationabile"; it is a faith which is blind in the very worst sense of the word, blind and unintelligible. Furthermore, faith in Kant's moral theory is diametrically opposed to faith as Catholics conceive

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

²² At this precise point it is of prime importance to review what Kant has said of such *postulates of practical reason*: "These postulates are not theoretical dogmas but, suppositions practically necessary; while then they do [not] extend our speculative knowledge, they give objective reality to the ideas of speculative reason in general . . . and give it a right to concepts, the possibility even of which it could not otherwise venture to affirm.

"These postulates are those of *immortality*, *freedom* positively considered . . . and the *existence of God*." *Ibid.*, pp. 229-230; see also p. 231.

²³ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 822, B 850 (p. 646).

²⁴ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 222.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

it. And yet, by an almost unbelievably ironic paradox, Kantians, intending it in no way as a compliment, attribute to us a faith which they falsely take to be ours, *but which in reality is their own*. This ironic boomerang must be studied to be appreciated. Lindsay, for example, writes:

This is the way in which Kant has "found it necessary to deny knowledge, in order to make room for faith." But it is becoming clear that such faith is not "that faculty by which we believe what we otherwise know to be untrue," but it is becoming identified with reason itself, viewed as a practical creative activity.²⁶

And Paulsen, another admirer of Kant, tells us:

In this way the critical philosophy solves the old problem of the relation of knowledge and faith. . . . It is its enduring merit to have drawn for the first time, with a firm hand and in clear outline, the dividing line between knowledge and faith.²⁷

And a moment later he adds:

It is naturally impossible to discuss these matters with those who are not open to conviction. Whoever is determined to subject his reason to ecclesiastical, which now means papist, authority, cannot be hindered.²⁸

Opinions so obviously incorrect are their own best refutation. But since they have introduced the subject, perhaps a word on the Catholic view will be profitable. Gilson has well summarized our position:

According to its very definition, faith implies assent of the intellect to that which the intellect does not see to be true, either as one of the first principles, or as one of their necessary conclusions. Consequently, an act of faith cannot be caused by a rational evidence, but entails an intervention of the will.²⁹

Manifestly, there is no question here of the intellect's giving assent to something which it knows from other sources to be untrue. There is place neither for any irrational element nor blind instinct nor irresistible urge; nor is there question of a *blind assent*. For while it is quite true that the intellect in making an act of faith is not moved by the "evidence of truth" (that is, it does not see that S is P), still it is actuated by the "evidence of credibility." It sees that the witness, whom it believes, is reliable. By giving such an assent it in no way jeopardizes its rational nature. It can say "Credo" without compromising itself. This it can do because, as St. Thomas has clearly shown, there is between faith and reason an order and relationship which is as complementary as it is

harmonious. In a word, faith has a validity, because it has an objectively valid basis in a system of thought which reverences knowledge at its true value and which assigns to faith and to reason each its own proper sphere.

But the idealist of the *Critiques* must find his road slightly more rugged. He had told us that in *knowing* an object, we have both subjective and objective grounds for holding a thing to be true; in *believing* we have only subjective sufficiency. What, may I ask, is this but to hold that when we believe, we are not moved by any kind of evidence, either by that of "truth" or that of "credibility"? Kantian faith, the conclusion seems inevitable, is an impulse, a subjective urge, some inexplicable internal necessity which extorts our assent. Perhaps we should rather have said "*consent*." For in Kantian faith our pure reason is not convinced, and our practical reason is incapable of being convinced. This latter faculty finds satisfaction in some mysterious way:

What had been held as true by the metaphysicians can neither be proved nor disproved; but practical reason needs it; therefore, it is safe against the possible attacks of scepticism, its safety being fully protected by its rational irresponsibility.³⁰

As we have already remarked, this is to subscribe to a faith that is *blind* in the very worst sense of the word. It is certainly not the faith in which loyal Catholics glory; nor is it the faith which is often erroneously attributed to the "shackled intellects of the benighted Schoolmen." This faith is of more recent vintage; it came into being during that disastrous ferment of the sixteenth century, thanks to the work of one who was

himself well trained in scholastic theology, but hated it as being destructive of simple faith and therefore of Christianity itself.³¹

And this distorted view of faith had to wait almost three centuries for the transcendental prophet of Königsberg to give it all the external apparatus of scientific formula. Paulsen admits as much, when he writes:

Indeed, one may in a certain sense regard Kant as the finisher of what Luther had begun. The original purpose of the Reformation was to make faith independent of knowledge, and conscience free from external authority. . . . Kant was the first who definitely destroyed the scholastic philosophy. By banishing religion from the field of science, and science from the sphere of religion, he afforded freedom and independence to both. And at the same time he placed morality on a Protestant basis,—not works, but the disposition of the heart.³²

²⁶ Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

²⁷ Friedrich Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant*, transl. J. E. Creighton and Albert Lefevre (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 6.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²⁹ Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), pp. 73-74.

³⁰ Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), pp. 235-236.

³¹ Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, p. 93.

³² Paulsen, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

It not infrequently happens that a philosopher is surprised and even displeased at the treatment he receives in the hands of his own followers. Acting with the best of intentions, they will take the master's conclusions as premises for their own doctrine and produce philosophical monsters, to the immense chagrin of the master. Immanuel Kant must have experienced such displeasure. A young disciple and admirer, Fichte by name, soon detected in Kant's philosophical structure a possible flaw. It was this: Kant had postulated two orders of knowledge which were distinct and heterogeneous, and yet which sprang from the same mind — the orders of sensibility and of understanding. But what in the mind can be their common source? Is there no way to account for their simultaneous heterogeneity and community of origin and concurrence of operation? To Fichte the repair work offered little difficulty. The common source is the Ego or Will. Finding itself restricted by the limitations of a material world, the Will overcomes such unintelligible reality by creating the world of sense and understanding. Furthermore, the continual agreement between the individual wills as to the world of sense and understanding is easily explained, for there is one Infinite Eternal Will which produces such worlds *in* and *by* our minds.

But to Hegel, whom we shall study next, Nature is the manifestation of an Absolute Idea in space and time. It accomplishes its external expression and progress towards self-awareness by reason of a law of its very being, the dialectical principle that progress is made through a conflict of opposites. And so struggles between classes, wars between nations, even contradictions among philosophical systems — all are part of the Absolute Idea's great process of self-realization. At the final synthesis all opposites will have lost themselves in the stability of the Eternal Idea's perfectly knowing itself and resting content therein. That golden era Hegel was quite prepared to say was near at hand; indeed, he identified it with his own age.

The Hegelian Dialectic and Post-Kantian Idealism

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THE story of early modern philosophy is the story of people who want to philosophize without having a metaphysics. It is not that men like Descartes and Francis Bacon were unintelligent. Rather, they failed as philosophers because philosophy had tried to commit suicide during the age of Nominalism. Philosophy, like many another attempted suicide, was somewhat intractable for a time. It was hard to do anything with her. Kant, I think, realized this. Writing about 1780, he remarked dolefully but truthfully: "At present, after everything has been tried, so they say, and tried in vain, there reign in philosophy weariness and complete indifference. . . ."¹

The early Post-Kantians were optimistic fellows, dwelling in the springtime of a new philosophy, feeling the strong power of a crescent thought within their veins. Kant had showed them, and it had been forgotten by many from the fourteenth century onward, that there are two levels of knowledge, sensation and understanding. This is what no nominalist can see. It could not have been understood by Knützen, Kant's Wolffian teacher. But Hegel saw it, and saw that philosophy belongs to a realm of thought all its own. He argued most eloquently for the autonomy of philosophy:

Everybody allows that to know any other science you must have first studied it, and that you can only claim to express a judgment upon it in virtue of such knowledge. Everybody allows that to make a shoe you must have learned and practised the craft of the shoemaker, though every man has a model in his own foot, and possesses in his hands the natural endowments for the operations required. For philosophy alone, it seems to be imagined, such study, care, and application are not in the least requisite.²

Whatever may be the errors of Kantianism and Hegelianism, I think we may say that Kant and Hegel in a certain sense belong in the grand tradition of philosophy. To them, philosophy is not sensism, not materialism, not nominalism, not positivism—it is not merely one science among others, as is chemistry or astronomy, but the Queen of all the sciences.³

The Triadic Dialectic

For more than a century, now, the most competent students of Hegelianism have engaged in a controversy as to whether it is the *method* or the *content of positive doctrine* which is most characteristic of the thought of Hegel.⁴ It is impossible for the historian of ideas to be unaware of the influence of both the formal and the material side of the system. Yet it is evident that neither can adequately be treated in a short study. Hence the present article is intended simply as a medium for suggesting some features of the Dialectic, considered in itself and in a few of its applications.

It is a conviction of mine that one can invariably spot a Hegelian in a philosophical discussion, by noting his gestures.

He will be found moving his hands about in magnificent, all-embracing circles. And such gesticulations are no chance mannerisms. He will inevitably be talking about the necessity of considering the problem from the point of view of the *Whole*. This is the ground-work of the Hegelian method. To understand something, one must situate it in relation to all other things. Mentally grasping an object in its context of concrete relationships makes it a concrete universal. Taking it by itself, in isolation from all its relations, is to deal with it as an abstract universal.⁵

Let us take an example. Think of the City of Chicago. What can be known of it, apart from its relations to other things? Very little. Geographically, we can think of it as north of St. Louis, west of New York, by a certain number of miles in each case. To be meaningful this relative knowledge requires a prior knowledge of the location of New York and St. Louis. Also, it implies a knowledge of the mile, as a unit of linear measurement. New York and St. Louis could be situated in relation to other geographical points, which in their turn would have to be known in relation to still other loci. This process of an expanding complexus of geographical relations could go on until all geographical points had been brought together into a complicated network of concrete relationships. The knowing of this complete situation would present us with a sort of whole, but not an absolute whole. There is still the matter of the distance in miles. A mile is so many human paces. A pace is the average stride of a man of a certain size. Thus we would need to know what kind of animal a man is, and what is average to him. To know this, we would need to enter into a new network of relations, by no means less complicated than the first. This sort of thing can go on pretty far. *To know any one thing exhaustively, one would have to know it in all its concrete relations with all other things.*⁶ This has been called the *organic* theory of truth; or, and I think this a better name, the *coherence theory*.⁷

It is in the context of this theory of the absolute Whole, that the triadic Dialectic of Hegel should be understood.⁸ Considered apart from its concrete setting, Chicago is an abstraction. Considered in the real manifold of its external relations, it is *not* an abstraction. Such opposition is a contradiction. The

⁵ Scholastic readers should note especially this doctrine of the abstract and concrete universals; it is very different from the Thomistic notion of metaphysical abstraction. Cf. Hegel, *Logic*, transl. by Wallace, pp. 294-295. McTaggart, J. M. E., *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896), pp. 10 ff. explain the point very well. The concrete universal plays an important part in the thought of Bernard Bosanquet; see his article, "Life and Philosophy," *Contemporary British Philosophy*, ed. J. H. Muirhead (London, 1925), I, 58.

⁶ "The truth is the whole." Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. by J. B. Baillie (2nd rev. ed.: New York: Macmillan Co., 1931), p. 81.

⁷ Carlyle satirizes it: "I say, there is not a red Indian, hunting by Lake Winnipeg, can quarrel with his squaw, but the whole world must smart for it: will not the price of beaver rise? It is a mathematical fact that the casting of this pebble from my hand alters the center of gravity of the universe." *Sartor Resartus* (New York: Burt, n.d.), Bk. III, c. 7, pp. 243-244.

⁸ Cf. J. Loewenberg, *Introduction to Hegel Selections* (New York: Scribner's, 1929), pp. xvi-xxxix.

¹ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. by M. Muller (2nd rev. ed.; New York: Macmillan and Co., 1927), Preface to First Edition, p. xviii.

² Hegel, *Logic*, transl. from the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* by W. Wallace (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), p. 9.

³ Cf. Kant, *loc. cit.* Hegel, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-22.

⁴ See the recent discussion of this point in: G. Watts Cunningham, "Hegelianism," *Runes' Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: 1942), pp. 123-124.

mind cannot, or should not, stop at this indecisive point. The contradiction should be resolved.⁹ The first way of considering Chicago is positive but rather empty in meaning; it is the moment of *thesis*. The second consideration negates the first; it is the moment of *antithesis*. The mind can now advance to the third, and culminating, moment, in which it is realized that the combination of the first two moments does not result in a complete destruction of all thought-content, but in a new notion, richer than either of the first two. This third moment is that of *synthesis*.¹⁰ The synthesis of one sequence of moments may become the thesis of a new process of thought. The universal formula for progress in thinking, as conceived by Hegel, is the passing from thesis, through antithesis, to synthesis.

Comments on the Dialectic

Certain observations on this dialectical method may profitably be made for those who are specially acquainted with Scholastic philosophy. First of all, it is clear that this is not an entirely new method in the history of philosophy. It is a generalization of the method by which the thirteenth century theologians resolved the over-simplified negative-positive theology of the ninth and tenth centuries. There is but a dim foreshadowing of the method of analogy in the *De divinis nominibus* of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, and in the *De divisione naturae* of Eriugena. I do not suggest that the Hegelian dialectic is identical with the Thomistic method of analogical reasoning; the theories of knowledge and reality in Hegel and St. Thomas are too different to make such a suggestion possible. But Hegel himself knew that he was moving in the current of an old and traditional mode of thought.¹¹ Its source goes back, at least, to the antithetic positions of Heraclitus and the Eleatics, to the antinomies of Plato's *Parmenides*, to a Neo-Platonic tradition running through the middle ages and appearing anew in the "coincidence of opposites" theories of Renaissance thinkers, such as Nicholas of Cusa and Jacob Boehme.¹² Hegel is original in universalizing the Dialectic, in applying it to all development of thought and reality.

As a final comment on the Dialectic, let us note that it does not require the denial of the truth of the principle of contradiction. That Hegel abandoned the principle of contradiction is the common contention of many of the little manuals of Scholastic metaphysics. The fact is Hegel knew that no logical thought is possible without a recognition of the value of the principle of contradiction.¹³ Hegel, however, did delight in paradoxes. A paradox is not an offense against the principle

of contradiction; one term of the paradox is always taken in a different referential context from the other. What is merely an interesting paradox to the well-informed, may be a plain contradiction to the ill-informed. Any good metaphysician knows that it is *true* that all being *is* (potentially, essentially), and that it is *not true* that all being *is* (actually, existentially). Hegel's contention is that the oppositions between thesis and antithesis are not perfect contradictions; though they are often contraries.¹⁴ The law of contradiction holds true in the abstract order. Thus, not-blue is the contradictory of blue, but there is no concrete reality which is "not-blue."¹⁵ In the real order, blue is opposed to *yellow* (or some other positive color), but this is not an abstract contradiction. Hegel argues that when the opposition of concrete entities is rightly understood it never turns out to be an unresolvable contradiction, but is some form of contrariety which may be resolved into a higher unity. Thus blue simply is not yellow,—but they are identical when viewed merely as two cases of color. It is quite possible that Hegel was wrong in thinking that all real oppositions may be so resolved.¹⁶ One need read only a little of Hegel to realize that McTaggart is right in saying that, for Hegel, "Truth consists, not of contradictions, but of moments which, if separated, would be contradictions, but which in their synthesis are reconciled and consistent."¹⁷

The Dialectic in Nature and in Mind

It has been seen that Hegel looked upon all reality as a completely intelligible whole. For him there is fundamentally but one sort of being; there is no absolute duality of mind and matter, or of finite and infinite. If we consider reality *in itself* (*an sich*), we find it to be of the nature of an abstract universal. It can be studied in this first moment, its laws discovered, and its knowledge recorded in the science of Logic.¹⁸ But this logical consideration is only the thesis for the development of our knowledge of reason in reality. It is possible, next, to think of the Absolute as it is *objectively* (*für sich*). In this condition it is universal Nature. It is now the antithesis of logical reality. In Nature, reality is externalized, diversified, subjected to the limitations of space and time. Under this aspect, the Absolute is extended, bodily, organic or inorganic; it is quite real in this moment in which it becomes Nature.¹⁹ Thus the "idealism" of Hegel does not entail the denial of the reality of a world of corporeal things. Such realities do exist and work in accordance with the laws discovered in the various physical and biological sciences. This is what differentiates Hegel from the subjective idealist; he recoiled from such a view as that of Berkeley.²⁰

⁹ "Contradiction is the very moving principle of the world: and it is ridiculous to say that contradiction is unthinkable. The only thing correct in that statement is that contradiction is not the end of the matter, but cancels itself." Hegel, *Logic*, transl. by Wallace, p. 223.

¹⁰ Hegel makes clever use of the verb, *aufheben*, in describing this dialectical process. It is a term of trivalent ambiguity, expressing at once the positive, the negative, and the combined notion. "Cancelling, superseding, brings out and lays bare its true twofold meaning which we found contained in the negative: to supersede (*aufheben*) is at once to negate and to preserve." *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. by Baillie, pp. 163-164. See William T. Harris' note on the term, *aufheben*, in the reprint of his translation of the *Outlines of Hegel's Logic*, in Loewenberg, *Hegel Selections*, p. 102, note.

¹¹ Hegel, *Logic*, transl. by Wallace, p. 149.

¹² Very interesting historical notes on the background of the Dialectic are to be found in: B. Croce, *What is Living and What is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel*, transl. from the 3rd Italian ed. by D. Ainslie (London: Macmillan and Co., 1915), c. 2, pp. 31-51.

¹³ See the justification of this statement in McTaggart, *op. cit.*, sect. 8, pp. 8-10.

¹⁴ In his treatment of the point in the *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. by Baillie, pp. 204 ff., Hegel uses black-white as an example of opposition, i.e. a case of contraries.

¹⁵ Hegel, *Logic*, transl. by Wallace, p. 221.

¹⁶ This is where Croce disagrees with Hegel. The Italian philosopher differentiates between what he calls *distincts*, which are unresolvable but real oppositions, and the oppositions of contrariety which can be resolved. It is Croce's contention that Hegel failed to recognize this distinction; this is one of the *Dead* things in Hegelianism. See *What is Living and What is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel*, pp. 82-96.

¹⁷ McTaggart, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁸ The first part of the *Encyclopadie* is the *Logik*, in *Werke*, Bd. VI.

¹⁹ It is so studied by Hegel in the second part of his *Encyclopadie*, that is, in the *Vorlesungen über die Naturphilosophie*, in *Werke*, Bd. VII, H. 1.

²⁰ Speaking of "empty Empiricism," Hegel says: "This kind of idealism is such a self-contradictory equivocation as scepticism; only, while the latter expresses itself negatively, the former does so in a positive way." *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. by Baillie, p. 279.

The Absolute in its second moment contrasts with itself in its original (logical) stage. This leads to the third moment in which the whole of reality is grasped as Absolute Mind (*Geist*). Here, the Absolute is known, and in fact exists, in and for itself (*an und fur sich*). This synthesis keeps the first two aspects distinct, while combining them; that is, the highest philosophical consideration of reality will have to advert to the fact that the being of logic and of Nature have a common ground (*Grund*), but that this ground does not imply an identity without any dissimilarity. At this point in the application, the ideal or mental aspect of reality seems to dominate. Reality becomes conscious of its own reasonableness. The Absolute is now *Geist*.²¹

I should like to suggest that the foregoing description of the three stages should not be understood too literally. It is not that the Absolute, as a *totality*, is now in one condition, now in a second, and again in a third. Actually, the Absolute is the resultant of the process.²² In a very proper Hegelian sense, it may be said that the Absolute does not change as a whole, though its parts do constantly interchange.²³ In its entirety, it has a sort of permanence, which, however, does not deny internal change. Hegel is sometimes regarded as a modern Heraclitean. It is more likely, I think, that he intended to combine Heraclitus and Parmenides,—not as Aristotle did by making forms a permanent part of an ever-changing world, but by making the whole of things a constant, with continual interchange of internal parts as one phase of this essential constancy.

The Dialectic in History

To understand Hegel's views on history it is well to attend to the disturbed conditions of his times and country. His lectures on the *Philosophy of History* were delivered several times during the period, 1822 to 1831.²⁴ At the beginning of the nineteenth century Germany was not a powerful nation but a group of little states, apparently incapable of union. The philosopher, J. G. Fichte, had done a good deal to revive the national spirit of his people.²⁵ Hegel did his part by writing the history of the world in such a way as to make

it appear that the German people were the lineal heirs to the greatest civilizations of the past. The four divisions of his *Weltgeschichte* deal successively with the Oriental World, the Greek World, the Roman World, and as a climax, the German World. To the non-German this division will seem a little arbitrary. With it, Hegel set the style for later German historians and, I think, contributed no little to the Bismarckian complex of the German people.²⁶

One might well wonder how a thinker noted for his intellectual honesty, as Hegel is, could effect what amounts to a distortion of modern history. In point of fact, Hegel carries over into the writing of history all his philosophical convictions. His *coherence theory* of truth requires him to regard the events of history from the point of view of the whole. It forbids him to consider history merely as the story of isolated events of the past. This anecdotal type of history, such as is found in Herodotus, is called *original history*²⁷ and is looked upon by Hegel as a very crude effort. The true historian must interpret events rather than record them. This leads to a second type of history, *reflective*, which is the antithesis of the first. In reflective history, the individual events are not, as they were in the first type of history, important in themselves. The writer of reflective history must rise above details and view them in relation to some larger scheme. The scheme may be the life of a nation, the correctness of some theory, the subjective criticism of historical events, or the interest of some special subject, such as Art, Law, or Religion.²⁸

The synthesis of original and reflective history lies in a new approach, the *Philosophical*.²⁹ "The history of the world presents us with a rational process." It is the business of the historian to discover the laws, the causes, the purposes, the design of world events. Hegel speaks with utter contempt of the opinion that the historian should be an impartial chronicler of actual events.³⁰ He thinks that every true historian should have a purpose and should explain his facts in the light of this purpose. Hence it is quite conceivable that to stimulate a heterogeneous people to national consciousness, world history might be so interpreted as to make that people feel that the modern world is their oyster.

The Triad: Art, Religion, Philosophy

When mind achieves the apex of its evolution, and becomes Absolute Mind, it undergoes its final triadic process. In the first moment of this triad, the Absolute (which is God, in a sense) finds expression in Art. In this thesis, the highest reality is revealed in a positive, implicit fashion, and thinks itself by an immediate intuition (*Anschauung*).³¹ It is in Art that the Absolute appears under sensuous forms.

The antithetic moment in this triad is found to be Religion.³² The mode of knowing proper to religion, in this sense,

²¹ So, the culminating part of the *Encyclopadie* is reached in the *Philosophie des Geistes*, in *Werke*, Bd. VII, H. 2.

Cf. "Spirit is alone Reality. It is the inner being of the world, that which essentially is, and is *per se*; it assumes objectivity, determinate form, and enters into relations with itself—it is externality (otherness), and exists for self; yet in this determination, and in its otherness, it is still one with itself—it is self-contained and self-complete, in itself and for itself at once." Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. by Baillie, p. 86.

²² "The truth is the whole. The whole, however, is merely the essential nature reaching its completeness through the process of its own development... Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only at the end is it what it is in very truth; . . ." *ibid.*, p. 82. There is a certain parallel, of which Hegel was quite aware (see: *ibid.*, p. 83), between this view of the essential nature of the Absolute as the term of a process of development and the Aristotelian theory of the ontogenetic evolution of an individual organism toward the point at which its essential purpose will be actualized within it.

²³ See Baillie's remarks in this connection in his *Introduction to the Phenomenology of Mind*, pp. 30-31. The following sentence is typical of his point of view: "The world is a process that is self-contained, and so as a whole is at rest with itself: It is a process *sub specie temporis*, but a unified whole *sub specie aeternitatis*."

²⁴ The *Vorlesungen uber die Philosophie der Geschichte* is posthumously edited and published as Bd. IX of the *Werke*. Hegel published only four major works during his lifetime: the *Phenomenology of Mind*, *Science of Logic*, *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*, and *Outlines of the Philosophy of Law*.

²⁵ See his: *Reden an die Deutsche Nation* (Berlin, 1807-1808), in *Werke*, ed. J. H. Fichte, Bd. VII (Berlin, 1845-1846).

²⁶ See my article: "The Philosophical Antecedents of German National Socialism," *Thought*, XIV (June, 1939), pp. 225-242.

²⁷ Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, transl. by J. Sibree (rev. ed.; New York: Wiley Book Co., 1900), pp. 1-4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8 ff. The quotation is from p. 9.

³⁰ See his section on Universal History (*Die Weltgeschichte*) in *Die Philosophie des Geistes*. The translation of this passage, by W. Wallace, is reprinted in Loewenberg's *Hegel Selections*, pp. 262-267.

³¹ Hegel dwells on this major triad in several works, but chiefly in the *Philosophie des Geistes*, in *Werke*, Bd. VII, H. 2, sect. 556 ff. But see also: *Phenomenology of Mind*, transl. by Baillie, pp. 696-808; and *Philosophy of History*, transl. by Sibree, pp. 52-53.

³² The *Vorlesungen uber die Philosophie der Religion*, in *Werke*, Bd. XI, contain the formal outline of Hegel's religious views.

is that of imaginative presentation (*Vorstellung*). This is the stage in which Absolute Mind manifests itself by way of revelation, of objective manifestation, of otherness. In this explicit but indirect form of consciousness, there is a contrast with the immediacy of knowledge found in Art. Thus religion negates art.

Philosophy is supposed to supply the synthesis. Under the section-heading, *Philosophy*, in the *Philosophie des Geistes*,³³ Hegel begins: "This science is the unity of Art and Religion." At this point, the Absolute Mind reaches pure self-consciousness, becomes a logical conception (*Begriff*). Thus reality is best known in Theodicy, the department of Hegelian philosophy which is more noble than any other. Summing up this triad, Hegel says of the Absolute Mind: "It is thus *One Individuality* which, presented in its essence as God, is honored and enjoyed in *Religion*; which is exhibited as an object of sensuous contemplation in *Art*; and is apprehended as an intellectual conception in *Philosophy*."³⁴

It is not difficult to see how Hegel arrived at the formulation of this supreme triad. From the Romantic movement in German thought (Schelling), he got the notion that art is a sort of dynamic common denominator of life and reality.³⁵ From his studies in revealed religion, not only Christianity but also ancient religions and those of the Orient, Hegel retained what is at least a tendency toward theism.³⁶ He felt, however, that he could harmonize the contradictions of the God of art and the God of religion in the all-embracing synthesis of his Logic.

However, the Hegelian Dialectic breaks down most obviously in this major triad. It is here that some of his most faithful

students part company with him. Croce, who is far from being an orthodox Hegelian but who, nevertheless, may be the most influential contemporary disciple, objects to the consideration of religion as a merely negative moment for art.³⁷ This is a surprising comment from a man who has identified the highest form of human endeavor with artistic intuition; yet it would seem to be a valid criticism. On the other hand, McTaggart criticizes the placing of philosophy in the third moment. Instead of being the synthesis, it should be part of the antithesis, he thinks.³⁸ There can be no final synthesis to this exalted triad.

The False Primacy of Method Over Reality

I think we may justly say that in the triad: Art, Religion, Philosophy, we have the crux of the Hegelian Dialectic. *It provides us with a magnificent example of the fitting of the material to the method.* It may well give us pause when we attempt to appraise the Dialectic in its other applications. *Does it ever explain the dynamics of reality?*

The epilogue, and answer, are to be found, I think, in the following serio-comic lines:

It is a mortifying circumstance, which greatly perplexes many a painstaking philosopher, that nature often refuses to second his most profound and elaborate efforts; so that after having invented one of the most ingenious and natural theories imaginable, she will have the perverseness to act directly in the teeth of his system, and flatly contradict his most favorite positions. This is a manifest and unmerited grievance, since it throws the censure of the vulgar and unlearned entirely upon the philosopher; whereas the fault is not to be ascribed to his theory, which is unquestionably correct, but to the waywardness of dame nature, who, with the proverbial fickleness of her sex, is continually indulging in coqueties and caprices, and seems really to take pleasure in violating all philosophic rules, and jilting the most learned and indefatigable of her adorers.³⁹

³⁷ "This is the first case of that abuse of the triadic form which offended, and still offends all who approach the system of Hegel, and has been justly described as an abuse. For who could ever persuade himself that religion is the not-being of art . . . ?" *What is Living and What is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel*, p. 97.

³⁸ McTaggart, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230.

³⁹ W. Irving, *Knickerbocker's New York* (New York: Putnam, 1860), p. 44.

"It [Hegelian Dialectic] provides us with a magnificent example of the fitting of the material to the method." Many a philosopher has found himself doomed to failure precisely because of that fatal substitution of thought for reality and the consequent false conception of philosophy as a "system." One who sincerely seeks after Wisdom can escape that Charybdis only if he is profoundly aware that Being is the first principle of knowledge and of metaphysics. It is from our intellectual apprehension of Being that philosophy and, in a certain sense, all other knowledges begin. But if one maintains that the first principle is Thought, not Being, sad results will follow; for he consults *his own mind* to discover—one might almost say to *construct*—reality. He does not allow reality to unfold its own story; rather, reality says what his mind wishes it to say. In some such fashion Hegel failed. His dialectic is a warning that reality is much too big and varied to be fitted into any mold.

Those who came after Hegel would not be pleased with such criticism. But they themselves began to advance criticism when it became evident with the passing of time that the world was still changing, that history went on as before, that perhaps the reign of William the Third of Prussia was not the promised Golden Age. And yet, surely Hegel's conclusions were not wrong? But had not he proclaimed that the Absolute Idea, having first transformed itself into nature (where it was in a state of unawareness of self), had come further to express itself in man? Then, by reason of man's ability to think, had it not through science, history, and philosophy come unto itself? Had he not thus shown that the Idea was about to achieve its ultimate design? that all mankind was verging on an unchangeable era? Clearly, then, something was wrong. What could be done to bolster up the system?

One answer was given by an Hegelian revolutionist, Ludwig Feuerbach. For him, there was no Absolute Idea. Man's self-consciousness has only himself for its object. Consequently even though man may speak of and worship God, he actually means and reveres *man*. Thus the supernatural and transcendent elements have gone, the Hegelian Idea has been supplanted. How simple a task for a Marx to convert Feuerbach's limited materialism into his own radical system! How easily Hegel's dialectic was understood as the law of the evolution of matter, and of all social and historical changes rooted in matter and determined by it. Hegelianism itself, alas! was not the synthesis, but the thesis of a new movement and evolution. "It had to be 'sublated' in its own sense, that is, in the sense that while its form had to be annihilated through criticism, the new content which had been won through it had to be saved" (Engels).

Marxism: The Birth of a Prejudice

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WHAT goes into the making of a radical materialist? The proverbial "... sugar 'n' spice 'n' everything nice ..." very definitely has no place in Karl Marx. Rather, one must take a nature which always tended toward extremes. Unto this add a deep distaste of religion, engendered when his parents for political reasons exchanged tepid faith in Judaism for an even more lukewarm adherence to Protestantism. Season long and thoroughly with the unrest of a turbulent and discontented liberal Rhineland, whose animus had been aroused by its abrupt annexation under decree of the Congress of Vienna to the conservative and Protestant Prussia. Bake well over the hot fire enkindled by radical materialists with whom he freely and constantly associated during his years at the Universities of Bonn and of Berlin. Such, in brief, is the making of a Karl Marx.

A Radical and His Prejudice

The hatred of all that savored of the ideal or spiritual deepened as the years went on. His intense devotion to materialism grew stronger until in time it gave rise to the prejudice which literally forecasts the future of his whole life and philosophy. *The prejudice which was the mother of Marxism was its author's determination to fit the entire universe into a materialistic mould. As soon as the tendencies of Marx's mind began to take definite shape it was clear that they involved a burning hatred of idealism and a blind devotion to materialism.*

One must not, however, think that the materialism which Marx cherished was that prevalent in the eighteenth century. Even as a young student, he despised it. He regarded its static concept of matter as incapable of offering an adequate explanation of the activity and progress in the universe. But we must above all remember that despite this glaring deficiency in the current materialism, *the one idea that never left Marx's mind was that materialism was the true philosophy of life. The determination to establish this thesis became the dominant passion of his life.*

The Influence of Hegel

Great as was the young materialist's dislike of idealism, there was one feature of Hegelianism (whose intellectual force and systematic thoroughness he acknowledged begrudgingly) which fascinated him—its dialectic. The incessant conflict of opposites producing necessary progress towards greater perfection gave Hegelianism a real 'vitalizing principle.' It was the absence of such a principle in the old materialism which made it appear to Marx so inadequate and unappealing.

From the outset, Marx was determined to find some comparable 'vitalizing principle' for his avowed materialism, but at first he had little success. He sought eagerly for it in his

doctoral dissertation, a comparative study of the materialism of Epicurus and Democritus. Later he turned to Strauss, Bauer and Feuerbach in the hope that their forms of materialism would contain the object of his search. It was only after several years, during which he was notably influenced by Feuerbach, that he began to see the solution to his problem. Strange as it may seem, the object of his quest was found in the very philosophy he hated most—Hegelianism. Stranger still, he now saw that the very element he had admired most in Hegelianism, its progressive dialectic, was capable of providing him with a truly dynamic materialism. He was now convinced that he could lift the dialectic framework from Hegelian idealism and simply make it a framework for a dialectic materialism.

Following this line of thought, *Marx envisioned material reality, instead of the Hegelian idea, as being composed of opposing elements. And the conflict of the opposites provided him with an explanation of motion and material progress.* He was now thoroughly convinced that he had found the clue to the self-sufficiency of matter.

The application of the dialectic to the world of nature thus afforded Marx the philosophical basis for his atheism. It presented him with an answer to the assertion that the very existence of the world demanded a Creator, that the activity in the universe necessitated a Prime Mover, that the order evident in all reality could only be accounted for by acknowledging an infinite, intelligent Designer. In a word, Marx now felt that, with full intellectual justification, he could insist upon the self-sufficiency of matter.

In his enthusiasm for his new-found 'dialectical materialism,' Marx never saw its obvious defects. Actually, instead of the conflict of opposing elements in material reality accounting for activity, such a conflict *presupposed* the presence of motion in the contradictory elements. Conflict is the resultant of *interacting* opposites; conflict is created by elements *moving* in opposite directions. Basically, the theory left active matter still dependent on a Prime Mover of the universe. But the enthusiastic Marx believed that at last he had found an explanation which would dispense with the necessity of a Creator.

Marx and His Social Philosophy

In the years immediately following his university career, Marx became intensely interested in social philosophy. His position as editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, a radical Cologne paper concerned with social problems, served both to intensify his interest in this phase of philosophy and to convince him that he knew very little about it. When Marx arrived in Paris in 1843, he had already succeeded in applying the Hegelian

Suggested Reading

Marx-Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1935).

Lenin, V., *The State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1932).

Lenin, V., *Religion* (New York: International Publishers, 1933).

The Program of the Communist International (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1936).

McFadden, C., *The Philosophy of Communism* (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1939).

Sheed, F., *Communism and Man* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1938).

Sheen, F., *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1938).

Extensive references on all phases of the subject will be found in the bibliographies to the two works mentioned above: *The Philosophy of Communism* and *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity*.

dialectic to the physical universe. His dominant interest, however, had now become social philosophy and once again he was confronted with the problem of formulating a social philosophy which would be based on a dynamic materialism.

Strangely enough, it was a very mediocre philosopher, Pierre Joseph Proudhon, who showed Marx how to adopt the Hegelian dialectic to social philosophy. In long evening sessions, Proudhon rebuked Marx for the vestiges of idealism which still remained in his mind and urged him to forget completely the Hegelian 'idea.' He pointed out to the supposedly original-minded Marx that if he wanted to see real dialectic operating he need only look about himself in society: *in the ever-present conflict of the exploiting class with the exploited class is to be found the real clash of opposites. In this single thought, Proudhon contributed what was to become the central lever in the Marxian system.*

Marx immediately saw that economic exploitation was the cause of conflict between the two opposing classes. The exploiting class owns the means of production and, consequently, holds a position of freedom and domination. The exploited class does not own any means of production and, therefore, finds itself in a position of subservience to the other class. *In the recognition of the so-called "right of private ownership," Marx believed that he had found the root of all class conflict and social misery.*

From this premise, firmly entrenched in his mind, the theory of economic determinism blossomed forth with all its ramifications. In all law, Marx could see only an instrument which the exploiting class had called into being to protect its own lucrative position. In the State, Marx saw only a class organization, a weapon of force which the exploiting class had created for the purpose of holding the exploited masses in their condition of subservience. In a word, the entire structure of society—the State, law, religion, morality, art, literature, music, etc.—is economically determined. The specific form which these various institutions take is directly determined by the current mode of production, while any essential change in the basic mode of production will necessarily produce a corresponding change in the structure of society. The current mode of production serves the interests of the presently ruling and owning class, and the entire structure of society is designed as a protection of that current mode of production. Here at last Marx had found a comprehensive, materialistic social philosophy.

The theory of economic determinism certainly shows Marx to be the victim of his blind prejudice. He was interested only in materialism, devoted to the dialectic, and witnessed radical social changes occurring in his age due to the advent of the Industrial Revolution. Without ever checking his theory with past history; he leaped to the general conclusions of economic determinism: *viewed statically, in any specific period, the entire social structure is a direct resultant of the current mode of production; viewed dynamically, any essential change in the structure of society is a direct resultant of an essential change in the mode of production.*

Marx was so imbued with his prejudice for a 'dialectical and materialistic' basis for social philosophy that he did not pause long enough to evaluate the evidence upon which his theory relied. A serious glance at past history would have revealed innumerable instances wherein his theory was contradicted by facts. Historically, radical changes in modes of pro-

duction had taken place without notably affecting the existing type of State; while, in other instances, essentially different types of States had existed and operated on identical modes of production. Such historical facts as these are inexplicable in terms of the Marxian theory. Furthermore, so prejudiced was Marx in favor of his ideas on exploitation that he never realized that his attacks were really directed towards *abuses* of both private ownership and state power. His charges were against the *historical* character which these institutions had often assumed. His arguments never touched the *philosophical* basis of either private ownership or the State.

Marx and Religion

Marx's analysis of the nature and purpose of religion naturally had to be made to fit his already-conceived theory of economic determinism. For him, it was not a matter of impartially investigating the origin of religion. It was not even a question as to whether or not religion had an economic basis. For him the only point to be investigated was the precise manner in which economic forces created religion and how religion served an economic purpose.

With this preconceived idea in his head, and with unquestionable abuses of religion before his eyes, it was quite easy for Marx to see that religion was simply 'the opium of the people.' He believed that he found religion serving as a drug for the minds of exploited masses in a threefold way: it taught the rich their *rights* and thereby confirmed them in their determination to exploit the poor; it taught the poor their *duties* towards the ruling class and thereby aided in their exploitation by the rich; finally, it instilled a spirit of passivity into the masses which was destructive of any activity on their part to strive for economic betterment.

One could hardly expect Marx to discover the true basis of religion when his investigation started from premises involving the non-existence of God and the total materiality of man's nature. But even beginning from such premises, one would wonder why a mere glance at history would not have shown him the falsity of his analysis. The Church had always been the one great force in civilization which throughout the centuries had constantly reprimanded the rich for their injustices towards the poor. It had been the most influential agency in the world working for the betterment of labor and the alleviation of suffering and poverty; it had taught resignation only to the truly ineradicable hardships of human life and had spared no effort to better what could be bettered in human life. Marx never perceived these truths because he did not even look for them. His prejudiced mind wanted only evidence that religion was economic in its origin and purposes. Only evidence which could be forced into that framework interested him. All else was ignored.

Marx and Morality

In his analysis of moral ideals, Marx once more made reality fit his theory. With his predetermined conviction that the Christian moral code must have been created by economic forces, it remained for him only to explain the *manner* in which these ideals served the exploiting class in its exploitation of the masses.

Unfortunately, the undeveloped and error-riddled nineteenth century anthropology furnished support for many of Marx's ideas, such as his view that private ownership had evolved out of a primitive communism. In this one respect, Marx is not to be blamed nearly so much as his present-day dis-

ciples. Marx had no way of knowing the falsity of the 'evidence' which the old anthropology presented in proof of evolution in religion and morals. The modern Marxists have witnessed the development of anthropology as a science and have seen it totally reject the immature conclusions which it held in Marx's day. Yet they have blindly and mechanically continued to present the ideas held on these topics by their Founder.

Marx's denial of the existence of God and the spirituality of man's soul, as well as his dependence on a false and undeveloped science of anthropology, made it impossible for him to arrive at a true concept of morality. But only the realization that he was interested solely in evidence which seemed to bolster his preconceived ideas on morality can account for his complete ignoring of much which disproved his theory. Thus, one would find it difficult to discover a statement more surprising than his charge that the specific character of Christianity's moral code results from the fact that it is designed primarily as a protection for private ownership. So startling is this charge that one is at first tempted not to take it seriously, for the accusation, if made seriously, certainly implies an amazing ignorance of just what the Christian moral ideal happens to be.

Anyone with even a superficial knowledge of Christianity knows that its moral ideal is achieved in a proportionately higher degree precisely to the extent that one succeeds in overcoming attachment to worldly possessions. Instead of the Christian moral code existing as a support for private ownership, it teaches man that he has attained higher levels of Christian spirituality in proportion to his abandonment of private ownership.

Marx's predetermined premises necessitated his regarding the Christian moral code as a 'class morality,' as a tool of the exploiting class. Yet he never analyzed Christianity deeply enough to perceive that it is the very opposite of a 'class morality.' Whenever there is a so-called 'conflict' between the *spiritual* welfare of the individual and the *material* welfare of the group, the spiritual good of the individual takes precedence. Certainly, the emphasis here is on the spiritual as opposed to the material; it elevates the spiritual interests of an individual above the material interests of a whole group. Christian morality is surely anything but a 'class morality.'

When Marx asserted that the Christian moral code was a weapon of class suppression, he once more neglected to cast even a hasty glance at history to see whether or not his theory checked with facts. History would have shown him that the ruling and exploiting classes had always been the most bitter enemies of Christian faith and morals. The most ruthless attempts to destroy Christianity had invariably been made by the ruling classes. And surely the ruling class would not seek to destroy that which, according to Marx, was its best servant. In contrast, history would have shown him that the greatest apostles of Christianity had arisen from the lower classes. And, certainly, members of the exploited class would not devote their lives to the spread of that which, according to Marx, was their most heartless oppressor.

There is only one explanation for the unrealistic analysis of Christian morality presented by Marx. His analysis arose from his prejudice towards economic determinism, not from an impartial analysis of Christian moral ideals. His basic theory specified that these moral ideals had to be economic

in their origin and purposes. Into that framework the Christian moral code had to be pushed and pressed. Any abuse of Christianity which would bolster that thesis was eagerly grasped and magnified. All other evidence held no interest for Marx.

Marx and Communist Society

The desire of Marx for a dynamic materialism, especially in the field of social philosophy, has appeared to many writers to represent more than a mere discontent with the out-moded materialism. There is a passion for justice and a thirst for perfect happiness which is wholly incompatible with the spirit of a materialistic philosophy. Christopher Dawson, among others, has noticed this unique characteristic of Marxism. He has called it "a union of intense apocalyptic conviction with a materialistic philosophy."

The messianic complex which seems to grip Marx is attributed by some writers to his Jewish ancestry. Certainly, a longing expectation of a messianic kingdom was the dominant thought in the Jewish mind for centuries. We know, moreover, that the Jews expected the kingdom of the Messiah to be one of earthly glory, power, peace and happiness. Although they did not exclude the idea of the spiritual from the Messiah's kingdom, they certainly did expect something more than a mere spiritual kingdom. It was their ardent hope and belief that the Messiah would come in power and majesty, crush their oppressors, and raise the Jewish people to a position of world supremacy. More than once Christ had to remind the Jews that His kingdom was not of this world. For instance, He had to give this reminder to the mother of the sons of Zebedee and, at another time, He had to flee when the crowds wished to make Him their king. But whether or not the messianic hopes of the Jewish mind had a subconscious influence on Marx is difficult to say. It can only be said that there is a striking similarity between the Jewish concept of the messianic kingdom and Marx's idea of the perfect communist society of the future.

Whatever its source may be, Marx's "messianic complex" caused him to predict a utopian society which is as unrealistic as anything ever conceived by the greatest visionaries. In it there will be no need of State authority, police, prisons, armies or navies. Men will be truly social-minded. Each will give whole-heartedly of his mental and physical capacities. And even though because of greater abilities, one has done more and better work than his neighbor, he will expect only the same recompense as his less-gifted fellow-worker. In the phrase of Marxism: "From each according to his capacities; to each according to his needs."

Truly, Marx surpasses even Rousseau in his faith in the inherent goodness of man. With a childish confidence, Marx speaks of the "mass change of human nature" which will take place as society casts off Capitalism, moves through the transitional period of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and enters ideal communist society.

To put it mildly, Marx shows an astounding ignorance of human nature. We do not expect him to understand the effects of original sin on the intellect and will of man. But we should imagine that a realistic glance at human nature would have revealed in it both inherent tendencies towards evil which would forever make his utopian dream impossible and, on the other hand, innumerable human desires which

could never be satiated by the purely material blessings of communist society.

By Way of Conclusion

Karl Marx hated idealism but, in a certain sense, one might say that he himself was one of the greatest of idealists. If idealism is characterized by a complete emphasis on the mental or subjective, if idealism is marked by a total ignoring of the objective or concrete reality, Marx's social philosophy makes him in some unique sense a true idealist. But

when viewed in the light of all his philosophical tenets, Marx will best be remembered as an ardent opponent of all that is spiritual and ideal—of all, consequently, that is best in life. A certain amount of intellectual effort and originality are not to be denied him. But the modern Marxist often should give serious thought to the fact that the doctrines to which he is pledged were born in a mind ruled by the grim hand of Dame Prejudice. Should he not then also judge those doctrines in accordance with that fact?

This series will be concluded in the November issue with articles on Positivism, Pragmatism and Bergsonism. The final article, "St. Thomas and the Modern Mind," will be contributed by the Reverend Gerald B. Phelan of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Of History as a Calculus Whose Term is Science

(Concluded)

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ALL enunciations we make are enunciations of existence; furthermore, it is true that those enunciations are as many or diverse as is *to be* itself. But human knowledge within the apprehension of being gravitates rather toward essence and the expression of that essence which is composite.³⁶ Of all our natural speculative knowledges, then, only two come to terms with the act of existing itself, the metaphysical and the historical. Now metaphysics in so far as it studies *esse* as the term indicated diversely in all enunciations, is a science, that is, a knowledge necessary, universal, of principles. The historian, too, is aware of the existence of the fact, in which exercise of existing there is necessity. But he must seek out the reason or principle of the contingent effect in its finite cause in the temporal process. There for the first time he faces contingency on its own ground. For the necessary and the contingent differ as they exist in their cause. The necessary is that which exists in its cause in such wise that it cannot not be: such are the rising of the sun, the occurrence of an eclipse, and the like. But there are some events which exist in their cause having therein a certain necessity as regards their happening for the most part, yet not having such absolute determinate character that in the lesser part they must be: of such events there can be conjectural knowledge, approximating certitude in such measure as the effects themselves approximate necessity: such is the judgment of the meteorologist as to winds and rains to come. But the peculiar contingent which always is discoverable in the properly historical question is that which in its cause is indifferent to the alternatives of being or not being; there the contingent both is and is not in such wise that it does not have either to be

or not be.³⁷ No creaturely knowledge, moved from potency to act by the existence of the object, can know the event of the contingent effect from its cause. God himself does not know the event in its antecedents. God knows the event by his own existence, which is the exemplar cause of all existence.³⁸ But the contingent as contained only in its cause does

³⁷ Alio modo potest considerari contingens ut est in sua causa. Et sic consideratur ut futurum, et ut contingens nondum determinatum ad unum: quia causa contingens se habet ad opposita. Et sic contingens non subditur per certitudinem alicui cognitioni. Unde quicumque cognoscit effectum contingentem in causa sua tantum, non habet de eo nisi conjecturalem cognitionem. Deus autem cognoscit omnia contingencia, non solum prout sunt in suis causis, sed etiam prout unumquodque eorum est actu in seipso. (S.T. I. 14. 13. resp.) Contingens a necessario differt, secundum quod unumquodque in sua causa est; contingens enim sic in sua causa est, ut non esse ex ea possit et esse; necessarium vero ex sua causa non potest non esse. (Sum. c. Gent. I. 67) Sciendum est igitur, quod antequam res sit non habet esse nisi in causis suis. Sed causae quaedam sunt ex quibus necessario sequitur effectus, quae impediri non possunt, et in istis causis habet causatum esse certum et determinatum, adeo quod potest ibi demonstrative sciri, sicut est ortus solis, et eclipsis, et hujusmodi. Quaedam autem sunt causae ex quibus consequuntur effectus ut in majori parte, sed tamen deficient in minori parte; unde in istis causis effectus futuri non habent certitudinem absolutam, sed quamdam, inquantum sunt magis determinatae causae ad unum quam ad aliud; et ideo per istas causas potest accipi scientia conjecturalis de futuris, quae tanto magis erit certa, quanto causae sunt magis determinatae ad unum; sicut est cognitio medici de sanitate et morte futura, et iudicium astrologi de ventis et pluviis futuris. Sed quaedam causae sunt quae se habent ad utrumque; et in istis causis effectus de futuro nullam habet certitudinem vel determinationem; et ideo contingencia ad utrumlibet in causis suis nullo modo cognosci possunt. Sed quando jam efficiuntur in rerum natura, tunc habent in seipsis esse determinatum; et ideo quando sunt in actu, certitudinaliter cognoscuntur, ut patet in eo qui videt Socratem currere, quia Socratem currere dum currit, necessarium est, et certam cognitionem habere potest. 1 Sent. 38. 1. 5 resp., ed. Mandonnet, p. 910. cf. De Ver. 8. 12 resp.; In VI Meta., lect. 3.

[Editor's Note: In the first installment of this article in the March issue, a reduplication in the text of footnote 31 led to the omission of footnote 35. The numbering of the footnotes in the text of p. 47 (March, 1942) should be: 1) "... be freezing."³² 2) "... and Ex-cantation."³³ 3) "... actio scientiae Divinae."³⁴ and finally in the very last sentence, "... indeterminate in its cause."³⁵ The omitted footnote reads:

³⁵ This is the contingent of the text: "Sed quaedam causae sunt quae se habent ad utrumque; et in istis causis effectus de futuro nullam habent certitudinem vel determinationem; et ideo contingencia ad utrumlibet in causis suis nullo modo cognosci possunt." In 1 Sent. d.38. 1.5 resp., (Ed. Mandonnet), p. 910.]

³⁶ cf. S.T. I. 12. 4 resp.

³⁸ Cum in re duo sint, quidditas rei, et ejus esse, his duobus respondet duplex operatio intellectus. Una quae dicitur a philosophis formatio, qua apprehendit quidditates rerum, quae etiam a Philosopho, in III De Anima, dicitur indivisibilem intelligentiam. Alia autem comprehendit esse rei, componendo affirmationem, quia etiam esse rei ex materia et forma compositae, a qua cognitionem accipit, consistit in quadam compositione formae ad materiam, vel accidentis ad subjectum. Similiter etiam in ipso Deo est considerare naturam ipsius, et esse ejus; et sicut natura sua est causa et exemplar omnis naturae, ita etiam esse suum est causa et exemplar omnis esse. Unde sicut cognoscendo essentiam suam, cognoscit omnem rem; ita cognoscendo esse suum, cognoscit esse cujuslibet rei; et sic cognoscit omnia enuntiabilia, quibus esse significatur; non tamen diversa operatione nec compositione, sed simpliciter; quia esse suum non est aliud ab essentia, nec est compositum

not fall with surety under any cognition, and of its event there can be only conjectural knowledge.

The historian, then, has the event in which there is necessity; he has the finite cause in which the event is contingent and indeterminate; and having appreciated the particular aptness of cause and event, he must seek out in the indeterminateness in the cause that which is necessary in the effect. This is impossible. At the same time, we have discovered, this is the only way the historian can proceed on a road to scientific knowledge: there is no distinction between the research historian and the synthetic historian. "The primary task of historical understanding tolerates no bifurcation between fact-finding and synthesis."³⁹ Yet the historian all along has been approaching just such knowledge, and like all things which are ordered to an end, this process can be valid only by reason of that which would be end and term.

To discover the significance of the process of historical investigation and the validity of the historian's many quasi-universal laws, we must consider the pattern of events from an entirely different point of view.

Unity of the World

The postulate under which alone history as an activity of the intelligence is possible is that in the totalities of time and space no individual is utterly divorced from another, in a word, that the world has a genuine unity of some sort.

Most great philosophers have said that much, but not all have said it to the same effect. For example, there is the famous line beginning with Plato, who taught in the *Timaeus* that the world is an animal, that is, a one thing with a world-soul;⁴⁰ some centuries later Proclus, the greatest Greek scholastic, was teaching the same.⁴¹ In the same current were to come Christians: Peter Abailard, who taught not only the unity of the world in the exemplar cause, The Word, but also its own unity under Plato's world-soul, which could be none other than the Holy Ghost;⁴² at the confines of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Thierry of Vribergh held the world to be an *unum per se*, and Meister Eckhart of Hochheim taught literally a structural unity of God and the world, a unity which he described as that of matter and form, of *ens* and *esse*, of potency and its act.⁴³ Today when we witness Berdyaev's eloquent appeal to Jakob Boehme, we recognize the same world view.⁴⁴

consequens; et sicut per idem cognoscit bonum et malum, ita per idem cognoscit affirmationes et negationes. 1 Sent. 38. 1. 3 resp., ed. Mandonnet pp. 903-904.

³⁹ Mandelbaum, *The Problem of Historical Knowledge* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 1938) p. 294; one should read the whole treatment, pp. 293-297.

⁴⁰ *Timaeus*, 30 B-C, D; 34 B.

⁴¹ *De Malorum Subsistentia*, ed. V. Cousin I (1820), p. 204.

⁴² De qua quidem anima mundi ea diligenter consideremus quae a Platone dicta sunt, a quo caeteri quoque philosophi quod de anima ipsa dixerint habuisse creduntur. Hanc itaque videlicet mundi animam, quasi tertiam a Deo, et personam distinguens, prolixiori et diligentiori descriptione prosequens, eam tam in seipsam quam in effectis suis integerrima designatione declarat, juxta quam et nos Spiritum Sanctum modo secundum effecta operum suorum dicere solemus, modo secundum naturalem bonitatis eius effectum, quam in seipso ab aeterno habuit, sicut diligentius postmodum distinguemus.

Nunc autem illa Platonis verba de anima mundi diligenter excutiamus, ut in eis Spiritum Sanctum integerrime designatum esse agnoscamus. . . . Bene autem Spiritum Sanctum animam mundi quasi vitam universaliter posuit. . . . Petri Abailardi, *Introductio ad Theologiam*, I. 17, PL 178, col. 1013.

⁴³ cf. the texts analyzed in B. J. Muller-Thym, *The Establishment of the University of Being in the Doctrine of Meister Eckhart of Hochheim* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1939), pp. 94 sqq.

⁴⁴ cf. N. Berdyaev, *The Meaning of History* (New York: Scribner's, 1936), pp. 56-58.

It is not our burden here to show why one cannot quite hold such a position; but in point of fact, the history of the development of the doctrine is at once its severest criticism. For the Plato who had taught such unity for the world, had also taught in the *Republic* that at the summit (we cannot say even of things) there is the Good beyond being,⁴⁵ and had closed the *Parmenides* with those remarkable texts in which it would seem that the One is beyond the principle of contradiction because the One is beyond being;⁴⁶ Plotinus was surely justifiable in his exegesis in the fifth *Ennead* when he held as platonic doctrine that the One and the Good are identical, and that this is beyond being and beyond knowledge;⁴⁷ Proclus taught the same. But whenever a Christian tried to adopt the same pattern of unity among things and at the same time could not but regard the unique source of all, God, as Creator, that is, as Being in the plenary sense of the name, the source of being to beings, he was involved in a difficulty which no one of them, however deft, could solve; indeed, the progress of research in mediaeval philosophy and theology makes clearer every day that the problem, which had never existed for the Greeks, since there was no community in being between being and the One or the Good, is simply insoluble on those terms for a Christian.

That observation is not without its importance in the present inquiry. For it can be shown just as easily that what we know as history would be impossible in the world of Plato and Plotinus.

Lack of Historical Sense Among Greeks

More than one person has remarked that history is not only a peculiarity of the western world, as Oswald Spengler has said,⁴⁸ but further it is something not Greek but Christian. For example, Professor Ross Hoffman demands that there be an idea of history having significant direction;⁴⁹ thus

Greek speculation, which achieved the highest flight of pre-Christian natural intelligence, attained to no philosophy of history whatever. Plato's notion, fancifully held, was that history proceeds through repetitious and apparently meaningless cycles; and such a conception was current generally in the classical age. "It may almost be described," wrote Bury,⁵⁰ "as the orthodox theory of cosmic time among the Greeks, and from them it passed to the Romans."⁵¹

But "the coming of the historical Christ from out of the transcendent heaven, to confirm the Jewish prophetic tradition and begin at last a meaningful historical action"⁵² aroused in men for the first time (outside of the Jews) a strong historical consciousness. Again His Grace, The Archbishop of York, who has rightly insisted on the absolute need of the historical sense for a religious, and more, for a Christian society, sees the Greek lack of a doctrine of a divine, creative will and providential direction, together with the Greek view

⁴⁵ *Republic* 509B.

⁴⁶ Proclus surely thought this: Et non mireris, si ubique honorans axiomata contradictionis Plato hic simul mentiri dicit et affirmationes in Uno. (R. Klibansky, *Ein Proklos-Fund und seine Bedeutung*, p. 13, note 2; this is an excerpt from the yet unpublished commentary on the *Parmenides*, this part of which survives only in the mediaeval Latin translation.)

⁴⁷ *Ennead* V. I. 8.

⁴⁸ We men of Western Culture are, with our historical sense, an exception and not a rule. World-history is our world-picture and not all mankind's. *The Decline of the West*, A. A. Knopf (1926), Introduction, Vol. I, p. 15; this text is used by Professor Ross Hoffman, *Tradition and Progress* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1938), p. 3, to whom we are indebted for the reference.

⁴⁹ Ross Hoffman, op. cit., p. 6.

⁵⁰ J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (Macmillan edition with introduction by Charles A. Beard, 1932), p. 12.

⁵¹ Ross Hoffman, op. cit., p. 7.

⁵² *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

of truth and its contemplation as an ultimate, as the reason for the Greek lack of historical sensitivity.⁵³ Berdyaev says it was because "they had no conception of history as fulfilling itself."⁵⁴

There is truth in each of these observations, rather more in some than in others. Actually, however, we need look no further than to the divergencies between Greek and Christian philosophy to understand why it was impossible that history, as we know it, exist among that gifted race.

It must never be forgotten that the Greeks view of providence and fate is of one piece with Greek speculation on reality. In the platonic system being (οὐσία), necessity, and knowledge constitute a great level flanked on the one side by the One, where there is neither being nor knowledge, and on the other by that which is below being, below knowledge, the region of the shadows of being and of knowledge. In this realm of the finite, singular existents known to the sense, whatever there is of necessity penetrates from above, never to be quite the necessity of the existent itself; rather there is something of a struggle between the material thing's own characteristic, possibility, and the necessity peculiar to that higher order. Plato knew well what he was doing when he described the origin of the world by way of the mixing of Being, Same and Other in a bowl, the mixing of the possible and the necessary.

But the doctrine of providence and fate is the exact counterpart of the doctrine of the necessary and the possible. There is providence; but in so far as the One is beyond being and knowledge, it is by that token beyond providence. That is why Plato, describing the origin of cosmos, had to declare: "And, moreover, as regards the numerical proportions which govern their masses and motions and their other qualities, we must conceive that God realized these everywhere with exactness, in so far as the nature of necessity submitted voluntarily or under persuasion, and thus ordered all in harmonious proportion."⁵⁵ There is no continuity in providence, any more than in being, between the unique source of all and the rest. And in this world below, providence may enter only as necessity, as that which comes from above to enter into conflict with fate, the equally potent principle of indeterminateness and unpredictability. The world of Plato, formed by the mixing of the possible and the necessary in a bowl, in its sequence is governed by what might as well have been described as the mixing of providence and fate.

A Function of Greek Tragedy

But if the Greeks did not have history as Christians do, they did possess something which stood in its place. That was tragedy.

Now there were certain elements constantly implicated with the tragic action which were characteristically Greek in the sense that they were understandable only against the background of such a doctrine of providence. We know the general characteristics of a tragic action: the change of fortune must be from better to worse; it cannot be that of a bad man's passing from misery to happiness, for this situation is the most untragic that can be; it has none of the requisites of tragedy; it does not appeal either to the human feeling in us, or to our pity, or to our fears. Nor, on the other hand should an extremely bad man

be seen falling from happiness to misery. Such a story may arouse the human feeling in us, but it will not move us to either pity or fear.⁵⁶

The tragic action takes place only when the noble man has committed a fault, some error of judgment, which should bring down on him some judgment; that this happens in a rather good and excellent man arouses pity, and the more, in measure as he is a man in the enjoyment of great reputation and prosperity; that this happen to one like ourselves arouses fear.⁵⁷

It is, of course, the clear genius of Aristotle that he described the tragic action in only these, its essentials. For actually, as the great tragedies worked themselves out, such was the downfall of man and of his house, that instead of the just or the equitable being meted out, instead even of such disproportionate misfortune's befalling him as to render the action tragic and yet allow human beings to attribute this event to the indeterminateness of the original error of judgment, the simply inexplicable must happen: he and his line undergo misfortune simply disproportionate to the original wrongdoing. And if such was the nature of his fall, also of a special kind must have been the pity and the fear aroused. For a Greek had to have pity for a man and fear for himself, since both were subject to a fate autonomous in the face of providence which is altogether valid only at the level of being and necessity. And this, perhaps, is an element accidental to tragedy as Aristotle described it, if not accidental to many Greek tragedies, which may not be quite discoverable in Christian tragedy or history.

But of that in which tragedy supplanted for history, Aristotle himself has again told us. For the universal of poetry (the poet deals with a universal, even though it be under a singular name or a singular figure) is that which transcends the singular of history, — a universal "what such kind of man will probably or necessarily say or do"; the poet must construct actions according to the law of probability and necessity, thus achieving in the tragic personages a kind of universality,⁵⁸ even in incidents which occur unexpectedly, let them occur in consequence of one another: *for this is more marvelous than if they happened of themselves or by mere chance*. And even those matters which are properly things of chance seem more marvelous when there is an appearance of design.⁵⁹ Whenever we read of yet another philosophy of history, with a bow in the direction of Aristotle, we call its author not an historian but a maker, a poet.

Finally, we must never forget that if tragedy could supply the universal which history never achieved, for Aristotle and in some measure for us Christians, it was in no small part due to this, that the world of classic Greek tragedy was still more the world of the Greek gods than the world of the principles of Greek philosophy. For the gods touched on the existence and the life of men in such a manner that the necessity elaborated in Greek philosophy never came to terms with singular concrete existence as they came to terms with it; thus somehow they were always present to the tragic action in such wise that the contingency inexplicable in the sequence of events could be resolved into the necessity of the god's decrees.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Aristotle, *Poetica* 13, 1452b34-1453a4.

⁵⁷ *op. cit.*, 1453a4-10.

⁵⁸ *op. cit.*, 9, 1451a37-1451b10.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 1452a1-11.

⁶⁰ We must simply refer the reader to the remarkable argument of E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (Yale University Press, 1941), chapter I: "God and Greek Philosophy."

⁵³ William Temple (Most Rev. Archbishop of York), essay III in *Revelation*, ed. John Baillie and Hugh Martin (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937); cf. *Nature, Man and God* (The Gifford Lectures for 1932-33, 1933-34), p. 93 and lecture 17, "The Meaning of History."

⁵⁴ N. Berdyaev, *The Meaning of History* (New York: Scribner's, 1936), p. 27.

⁵⁵ *Timaeus*, 56C.

Christian Source of Unity: Divine Providence

Since the world of Greek philosophy will not solve our problem, let us take what appears to be the alternative, and with St. Thomas declare that the unity of the world is a unity of order, a unity in which the way all creatures hold their being indicates the one cause of them and their hierarchy.⁶¹ That unity, when we shall have understood it altogether, exists rather in its source, the divine providence. For the divine intellection, which is the divine act of being, is the cause to all creatures of their being.⁶² And thus, as they hold themselves diversely and ordered in being, it is necessary that the *ratio* of the ordering of things to their ends also exist in the divine mind; and this is providence.⁶³ Since that knowledge is productive of all things (in much the same way as the knowledge of an artist makes the work of art⁶⁴), and since the world, which is one and not many,⁶⁵ has been made not by chance but by God acting through intellect, it is necessary that there be a form, an idea, to whose likeness the world is made.⁶⁶ Nothing escapes that providence, for the perfect providence extends even to the most particular; by it is attained the order of the universe designed by God, not coming about by chance through a succession of secondary agents;⁶⁷ under that providence secondary causes exercise in their own right full measure of efficiency; under that providence each of the things existing in this world stands in the exercise of its own *to be*, which is simply diverse, and in which is rooted that which to it is its necessity.

This is a science, not discursive, not caused, but identical with the pure act of being, most universal, absolutely necessary. This is the only science of the sequence of contingent events, and is that toward which the historian has been working constantly.

"... A Calculus Whose Term is Science"

Thus, while it is still true that history can never be a science, yet it remains that the historian may enter on a course of working through the manifold of singulars and of the order of things: a process made possible, conditioned and regulated by the knowledge which is the divine providence; yet the latter as term can never be achieved in process. This is what men call a calculus. It is a process of approaching term as a limit; it is a process validated only by the term approached; it is a process in which term can never be achieved, and in which term does not even have to be known.

One can understand how the historian in the grip of that finality will at times abandon something of his own work in order to create a person, a movement, a law which has never existed until that moment;⁶⁸ it is all too easy to desert history for ποίησις. Indeed, there would be little danger in this for the world, were the historian frankly to allow that he has then given us a poetic, not an historical truth, and

were the historian willing at any moment to fashion a more plausible poetic truth upon the presentation of new evidence or a more shrewd reading of the old. But this is a hard thing to ask, for artists love their works as fathers love their own children.

There remains, then, a genuine scientific character to history. For history, so understood, may rightly be regarded as a method working through knowledge toward a knowledge, which, if it could ever be thus achieved, would be a science, simply excellent as no particular human science is excellent. So understood, all the things we must deny history—its being a science, its having a place of its own in the hierarchy of human knowledges—are a tribute to its unique value in the intellectual life of man. The historian who is not an historian of philosophy or an historian of mathematics is in a position where he can never, on the terms of his own method, formulate law or disengage principle with an assurance of finality; but his humble state is not so much due to the ignobility of his craft as to the fact that he is always verging on a knowledge which is greater than any of these. For the historian must always be at work to discover in the contingency in the finite cause something of that which is necessity in the effect; and this is not given to men, but is in the world as a promise to ratify a work which will never be done by doing it.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ It should be clear that not only does the present essay deny that history is a science, but also that there may be such a thing as a philosophy of history. The question is altogether different whether there be a theology of history. That is the name by which St. Augustine's famous historical rationale ought to be designated rather than by that of philosophy of history. (cf. Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*, pp. 462-467, especially 467, n. 1; U.-A. Padovani, "La Città di Dio di sant' Agostino: teologia e non filosofia della storia" in *S. Agostino*, II, pp. 220-263.) And neither Jews nor Christians, those who have received the word of God, can doubt there is a theology of history. We have certain elements of such a theology; for example, the treatment St. Thomas Aquinas gives to the time of the Incarnation as the most perfect time for that mystery: it is not to be doubted that such was the most perfect time; and given this, then many reasons can be assigned for the congruity of that time. (in *III Sent.* 1. 1. 4, ed. Mandonnet-Moos, pp. 25-26.) We know many such things: that the Church will last to the end of time, that the Holy Ghost renews the face of the earth; the allegory and the anagogy of the Scriptures are full of the elements of that theology. The fact is that, given the principles of that theology by revelation, we are able in its light somewhat to understand the sequence of events after the fact. But given even such insight into Providence, we are not able in any specific manner to look into the future and understand its event from the present: and in this a theology of history in no manner would pretend to supply for a philosophy of history. (There is an interesting text in St. Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* Lib. II, c. 38, PL 34.55-56, that although historical accounts narrate the past deeds and institutions of men, history itself cannot be numbered among the things of human institution: God himself is the founder and administrator of things in the historical order. Thus, much as we have maintained in our essay, St. Augustine goes on to say that it is one thing to relate things which have been done, but quite another to teach what things are to be done. History relates faithfully the things which have been done: but such human documents as profess to teach the things to be done, for example the books of the haruspices, do this not by reason of trustworthiness but by reason of audacity.)

But what may be the character of the theology of history belongs to an enquiry other than the present one.

A last word for the sake of better understanding: we have taken history as it is represented in the work of modern scientific historians, for such a history undoubtedly aims at a universal and at being a science, although it is the historians themselves who most resolutely and properly refuse ever to conclude to that universal. But there is another conception of history (and far more venerable in years), in which history, though ordered to something beyond itself, does not aim at a science by induction from historical particulars. In a very strange manner that view is perpetuated in a line from Cicero, through St. Augustine, Francis Bacon, even to Macaulay. We have never referred to those men here because that view is irrelevant to our investigation. At another time we hope to describe the curious development of that view of history.

⁶¹ *S.T.*, I. 47. 3. resp.

⁶² *op. cit.*, I. 14. 8. resp.

⁶³ *op. cit.*, I. 22. 1. resp.

⁶⁴ *op. cit.*, I. 14. 8. resp.

⁶⁵ *op. cit.*, I. 47. 3. resp.

⁶⁶ Quia igitur mundus non est casu factus, sed est factus a Deo per intellectum agentem, ut infra patebit, necesse est quod in mente divina sit forma, ad similitudinem cuius mundus est factus. Et in hoc consistit ratio ideae. *op. cit.*, I. 15. 1. resp.

⁶⁷ Ordo igitur universi est proprie a Deo intentus, et non per accidens proveniens secundum successionem agentium: prout quidam dixerunt quod Deus creavit primum creatum tantum. . . . *op. cit.*, I. 15. 2. resp.

⁶⁸ cf. Mais c'est qu'au fond les historiens n'aiment pas les hommes, ils n'aiment que les problèmes, parceque l'histoire veut être une science et que les hommes ne sont pas susceptibles de solution. E. Gilson, essay "Rabelais Franciscain" in *Les Idées et les Lettres*, p. 241.

Book Reviews

SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, VOLUME I

Saint Thomas Aquinas
Institute of Medieval Studies of Ottawa, 1941

The first two volumes (I, I-IIae) of the first American edition of the *Summa Theologiae* have just appeared. We hail them as a happy sign of the growth of Christian philosophy in the new world. The Institute of Medieval Studies of Ottawa is to be congratulated for undertaking such a timely work; such an edition was an actual necessity in view of the practical impossibility of getting books from warring Europe.

The Piana text was selected by the editors as a basis for this new edition, and in the preface they offer cogent reasons for their decision. The editors, however, have not confined themselves rigidly to this text, but have availed themselves as well of the critical development brought about by modern scholars, such as Grabmann, Mandonnet, and the editors of the Leonine edition. The results are quite gratifying. Besides giving us a good critical text of the *Summa*, the editors have added several valuable features. In the first place, a great help for the student are the historical notes indicating author, book, and chapter, wherever Thomas has been quite satisfied to say: "Quidam autem dicunt." Moreover in the beginning of the volume is found a complete bibliographical list of the authors and works cited by St. Thomas. Another excellent feature is the very complete indication of parallel texts in which the Angelic Doctor treats the same question. The order of works cited in such cases is chronological—a circumstance that makes it easier to ascertain any evolution in the doctrine.

It must be stated, however, that the technical execution of this edition is not as perfect as could have been expected. While the text is quite legible, the size of type is rather small and not extremely clear. The paper, too, probably on account of the shortage caused by the war is poor, and the binding decidedly weak. It is "piously to be hoped" that these defects will be remedied when conditions return to normal, and that the present price may be lowered for the benefit of poorer students.

But this is secondary. The important fact is that the philosophy of St. Thomas has made such headway in America during the past few years as to warrant this first American edition of the *Summa*, which we hope will soon be followed by other works until a complete American edition of the writings of the *Doctor Communis* is made available.

HENRI J. RENARD

A COMPANION TO THE SUMMA: I. THE ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE

Walter Farrell, O.P.
Sheed and Ward, 1941, pp. vii + 457, \$3.50

In the sequence of publication, *The Architect of the Universe* is the third volume of Father Farrell's great Neo-Thomistic work, *The Companion to the Summa*. Its predecessors were Volume II: *The Pursuit of Happiness* and Volume III: *The Fullness of Life*. Organically and in the logical development of the author's work the present volume is Volume I. Just as the two former volumes correspond with the *Prima Secundae* and the *Secunda Secundae*, this volume corresponds with the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas and attempts to put in popular form St. Thomas' masterful study of God, man, and the world.

St. Thomas wrote his *Summa Theologica* as a compendium or text-book of Catholic Wisdom. But he wrote it in an

age whose civilization and culture was based on an intellectualism which appreciated that the nature of man was intellectual and the end of man was to know and to know the highest truth which is wisdom. Wisdom is today the end of man. But because of the Reformation and the substitution of volitionalism, sentimentalism, materialism, positivism, and agnosticism for intellectual thought, our intellectually blind culture of activity and our confused civilization of practicality and material prosperity can little appreciate the supreme value of speculative truth. Wisdom stands a stranger in our midst. Even a compendium and a text-book of wisdom is unintelligible, even for the sincere seeker after a way out of the intellectual confusion. He needs a mutual friend to introduce him to this strange being: wisdom.

To provide such a friend, to our way of thinking, was Father Farrell's intention in writing his *Companion to the Summa*. It was not his aim to translate St. Thomas' work, not to write a commentary upon it, nor to digest it, nor even to throw light upon it; his work is more of the nature of an opening in the solid wall that anti-intellectualism has built against the light of truth and wisdom—an aperture through which the sincere soul can once again gaze upon the light of metaphysical truth. The author's deep understanding of St. Thomas, his sympathy with the difficulties that our age raises against speculation, his vivid and vital style and capacity of apt illustration make these volumes (to use another figure) corrective lenses for the astigmatism of the modern mind. The author is to be congratulated for the excellent work he has been doing for the revival of the wisdom of St. Thomas, and we impatiently await the publication of the fourth volume of the *Companion*.

JOHN J. O'BRIEN

PLATO'S EARLIER DIALECTIC

Richard Robinson
Cornell University Press, 1941, pp. viii + 239, \$3.00

Plato's logical theory is scarcely a separate branch of his philosophy, but rather an attitude and a method to be observed in his very handling of philosophical questions. Though nearly every argument and convolution of thought analyzed in Aristotle's *Topics* and *Sophistici Elenchi* can be illustrated from the Dialogues, Plato has refused to take them out of that living context and expound them systematically in a book of rules or aphorisms. Reducing them to a system is not easy, and the attempt calls for uncommon acuteness of observation and constant awareness of the special nature of Plato's writings. Professor Robinson shows himself in this book a qualified investigator. He is writing only of Plato's logic as it appears in the early and middle Dialogues. This he treats with clarity, acumen, and a freshness of style and approach that make for a stimulating book.

After warning against the temptation to read into an early thinker concepts and distinctions familiar to us only from later speculation, he makes a critical analysis first of the Socratic elenchus and its concomitant procedures, then of the dialectical method characteristic of the middle Dialogues. The Socratic cross-examination of self-satisfied opinion is shown to be destructive, syllogistic, and indirect, though not always in practice as purely so as Plato seems to think. The epagoge and "What-is-X?" form of definition in the early Dialogues are then examined, and certain weaknesses discussed. The author in passing on to the dialectical method of the later works makes the good point that it is at heart Plato's effort to convert his master's procedure

into a constructive and positive way to truth. From this developed the idea of hypothesis, which Professor Robinson traces from its unsure beginnings in the *Meno* to its full elaboration in the *Phaedo* with the appeal to a higher hypothesis to justify the original supposition, and its culmination in the Divided Line of the *Republic*, where the hypothesis itself is made the subject of proof by intuition of its truth manifested in the irrefutable consistency of its logical procession. That is, the explanation of this vexed question how Plato claims to arrive at certitude *via* the tentative approximation characteristic of the hypothetical method lies in the fact that the hypothesis here is basically the old elenchus in new guise. This is the finest chapter of the book. The concluding two take up the relation of the Line to the Cave in the doctrine of the *Republic* (which are shown not to be parallel in intention), and Plato's use of analogy and images for philosophical exposition, despite his theoretic mistrust of their value as proof.

The various interpretations of these passages are entered into with fine critical appraisal, and the author's new solutions for them are very ably and very fairly argued. Most of these are likely to commend themselves generally, though Plato scholars may find certain of them open to criticism. Moreover, it is questionable that Plato is so often unaware of the implications or methodology of his own thought as we are asked to believe. The Dialogues are not a full, or even a just, statement of Plato's deepest insight into certain problems, though they are all *we* have to go by. Again, the frequent complaint that Plato is ambiguous or indecisive on many issues overlooks the fact that the Dialogues seem intended primarily to interest people in philosophy and its problems, rather than to spoon-feed them with the final answers. The more tantalizingly an almost-but-not-quite-solved issue is set stirring in men's minds, the more imperative is their impulse to become full-time philosophers and track down the answer for themselves. Robinson's criticism of Socratic definition as merely amounting to "Please make some true statement about X" (p. 61), and several similar complaints, would perhaps be less impatient were this aspect of the Dialogues kept in mind.

The book (which is well indexed) is definitely valuable and important. It throws much new light on the whole problem. If it leaves us not wholly satisfied on certain issues, and forced to re-investigate the evidence and check the solutions here offered—well, that is just what Plato would like!

RAYMOND V. SCHODER

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ARISTOTLE

Clarence Shute

Columbia University Press, 1941, pp ix + 148, \$2.00

In this summary analysis of the living organism, Professor Shute attempts to present an objective study of the fundamental pattern of Aristotle's psychology as revealed by Aristotle's writings alone. You will find here no discussion or criticism of the questions raised and resolved by Aristotle. In this, the author should not be criticized. Since, however, in such an objective presentation of a synthesis of texts, even an unbiased compiler's interpretation can often unconsciously become a misinterpretation of the meaning of the original text; the author in his foreword is honest enough to make apology beforehand: "The writer heartily concedes that he is a child of his age and liable to errors that any background of approach is likely to lead to" (p. vii).

Indeed, students of Aristotle will certainly take issue with much of the author's presentation of Aristotle, just as they will find much to praise. The important place given to finality

as a key to the understanding of Aristotle is good. Splendid is the concluding sentence to the chapter on growth, which well sums up the author's method of treatment: "Generation and growth as processes, while distinguishable and having unique characteristics, are yet different aspects of one fundamental reality" (p. 56). Excellent, too, is the evaluation of Aristotle's solution to the pseudo-problem which modern psychology raises so often simply because it does not understand the terms involved: "With Aristotle's definition of the soul as the actuality of a natural body having organs, the usual problem of the relation of soul and body does not exist" (p. 128). Thus, true to Aristotle, the author does not discuss soul apart from the human composite, because "soul is not something which, in and of itself, acts" (p. 33).

Yet, it is difficult to see that the full implication of soul as substantial form or the difference between formal and efficient causality are fully appreciated. To speak of the soul as "a function of the organism . . . being actualized synchronously with the organism" is hardly to understand soul as first act. In general, the impression given is that act and action are confused. Oddly enough, this likely misconception of act is due to a misunderstanding of pure potency. The pure potency which is matter is not so much as mentioned. The pure potency of intellect is thus presented: "The thinking faculty of the soul . . . has no actual existence except when it thinks" (p. 54).

As a general criticism of the synthesis, it should be said that too much emphasis is placed upon organic life as such. The crucial problem of the origin of intellectual knowledge, with which Aristotle confronted Plato, is ignored. For the rest, it does seem that the author has unwittingly brought to his study of Aristotle a definite background in which can be discerned outlines of a psychology at least tinged with behaviourism and a metaphysics which does not consider as basic the difference between substance and accident. Perhaps this criticism and the reviewer's own slight appreciation of Aristotle are also coloured by background. In this he makes no apology, since the master whom he has learned to follow in his understanding of Aristotle happens to be Thomas Aquinas, whose commentaries on the works of The Philosopher still remain unexcelled.

FRANCIS J. O'REILLY

THEISM AND COSMOLOGY

John Laird

Alliance Book Corporation, 1942, pp. 325, \$3.50

The aim of these Gifford Lectures is to show that theism cannot be demonstrated on cosmological grounds. If you accept Hume's critique of causality as final and valid, you will agree with the author that the traditional arguments for God's existence do not take us beyond the world to a transcendent deity. Professor Laird, then, is satisfied with a mitigated pantheism. He cannot see how the creation theory has any important theological advantages over the emanation theory. With Bergson, he believes that coming-to-be is the marrow and essence of all actuality. A limited, spatio-temporal deity may very well be all the God there is. He grants, however, that it may be reasonable to believe in the existence of a transcendent Creator-God.

These lectures show clearly that it is impossible to rise to a rational knowledge of God's existence and attributes if one accepts the principles and conclusions of modern philosophy. They should lead the sincere seeker for truth to suspect that there must be something fundamentally wrong with philosophies that can be satisfied with washed-out notions of reality.

THEODORE WOLF

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

Edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp
Northwestern University, 1941, pp. xviii + 745, \$4.00

This ponderous volume is the third in the series of *The Library of Living Philosophers*. Whitehead himself contributes an autobiographical sketch and two short papers. The rest of the book is made up of articles by eighteen outstanding philosophers and scientists. These men are all teachers and their contributions doubtless reflect their lectures to their classes. As a consequence, the work is on a high academic and professional level. Whitehead, now in his eighties, was too ill to write a reply to the comments. Considering the variety of angles from which the comments were made, one cannot but feel that to attempt an adequate reply would have made even the hardiest of men ill. Each contributor formulates his presentation and criticism according to his own personal predilection, and one or two come near to using the book as a mere sounding board for a pet doctrine of their own. Despite this, anyone who has labored through Whitehead's philosophical works will be gratified to learn how others have been affected by his writings. It would have helped to a better understanding had at least one Scholastic writer been among the contributors. That would have more or less given the reaction of a school (Should I say the only school left?) instead of the varied reactions of individual savants.

Throughout the book there is an air of refined Positivism. Hence we are not surprised that there is general agreement that Whitehead's philosophy is, likewise, "descriptive." The difference is that, as all agree, his descriptions are modeled on mathematical symbolism. (Whitehead turned from mathematics to philosophy at the age of 61.) Many readers would have appreciated an exact statement of the mathematical concepts, or constructs, employed and the manner of their application to the philosophical field. The three first papers embody that purpose but the subsequent ones do not carry it through. Strange as it may seem for a philosophy professedly mathematical, the book's final phrase, written by Whitehead himself, is accepted as most descriptive of his doctrine: "exactness is a fake."

J. A. McWILLIAMS

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BACKGROUND

Basil Willey
Columbia University Press, 1941, pp. viii + 302, \$3.25

In an earlier book, *The Seventeenth Century Background* (1934), Mr. Willey began an inquiry into the history of certain basic ideas as a means of understanding the intellectual climate of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and of illustrating certain tendencies which culminated in the nature poetry of Wordsworth. For the eighteenth century the theme is the idea of "Nature," an admirable choice as anyone who is acquainted with the complexities of its use in the philosophy and religion of the period will immediately recognize. The writers whose understandings of the term are here examined are, with the exception of Hume, mainly moralists; they are the physico-theologians Burnet, Ray, and Derham; the social philosophers Shaftesbury and Godwin; the scientific moralists Priestly and Hartley; the minister Joseph Butler; the satirist Mandeville. This is a strange assembly, but it is precisely the function of the historian of ideas to accumulate the various influences of men who affected the thought of their times and to show how these influences converge to effect a well-defined intellectual tradition.

Mr. Willey begins with the concept of Nature during the

decades which preceded the eighteenth century. Here, in a section which is fortunately not representative of the whole book, the author is caught in the historicism of trying to found a tradition upon a past which apparently he does not fully understand. His comparison, for instance, of the interpretation of Nature in the Middle Ages with that in the Age of Enlightenment amounts to plain distortion; one proves nothing by contrasting the popular superstition of one age with the educated opinion of another (p. 4). Again, his effort to trace the problem of evil (p. 47) is offensive in its vague, half-true brief of St. Thomas' explanation. Once Mr. Willey gets to his own period, however, he is much more at home and deals with eighteenth century opinion as one who is aware of the full significance of the extracts he uses.

The principal theme about which discussion of the various writers is organized is their understanding of Nature, and mainly of the relationship between Nature and the Supreme Being. Mr. Willey pursues the subject from the concept of Nature of Ray and Shaftesbury as the more or less static and perfect organization of Divine Intelligence, through Hume who jarred the eighteenth century conviction of the omnipotence of reason and Priestly who upheld religion in the name of science, to Godwin who defended Revolution in the name of Nature and Burke who attacked it on the same basis. The most evident feature of the development has been to regard Nature less as a proof of God's existence which appeals to the reason than as the object in which our feelings and emotions find the satisfaction which brings us as close to divinity as we may come. Thus the stage is set for Wordsworth who, though he thought of himself as a rebel from the ways of the eighteenth century, was in fact its legitimate product.

In Wordsworth the cycle is completed. From Nature as the pattern of divinity, the expression of the Universal Lord, we are come to Nature as "mute, insensate things" which enoble man as he merges himself in them. It is the transition—to put the matter too simply—from *reasoning* to *feeling* one's way to the Supreme Being of the deists.

RICHARD H. GREEN

PHILODEMUS: ON METHODS OF INFERENCE

Edited and translated by Phillip Howard De Lacy and
Estelle Allen De Lacy
American Philological Association, 1941, pp. ix + 200, \$2.50

One of the many doctrinal issues that brought Epicureanism into conflict with Stoicism was the epistemological problem. The present work is a study of the more particularized question of the validity of inference as it is presented in the treatise of Philodemus the Epicurean. The authors offer us the text, which was discovered among the Herculeum papyri, together with a translation and an appended series of essays treating of the fonts of Epicurean empiricism, the development of its system of logic, and the controversies on this science that existed between the Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics.

The text itself is primarily a defense by Philodemus of the Epicurean method of inference by analogy against the Stoic attack and proposal of the method of contraposition. Fundamentally the treatise resolves itself into a presentation of a valid method for extending our knowledge from the particular to the more universal. Both systems, in reality, start from an inductive empirical process, the difference being that the Stoics transcend the data of the senses and recognize the fact that they have arrived at an essential property and thus begin a deductive process, while the Epicureans, although in fact they attain the same position

(cf. Nos. xxxiv-xxxv), prefer to remain at a purely empirical level. Hence their widest conclusion is that of a strictly incomplete induction which will only give probability to the unperceived.

In presenting us with this book on the Epicurean system of signs, the authors have done a fine piece of work for the furtherance of study in ancient philosophy. However, to imply as they do (pp. v, vi, 120 et passim) that ancient philosophy was purely rationalistic and dogmatic until the advent of Hellenistic philosophy, is completely to misinterpret Platonism and Aristotelianism; and any exegesis which would set up a dichotomy between the rational and empirical in those systems is false. Again the statement (p. 127) on Aristotle's rhetoric as concerned not "with truth but only with conjecture of the probable or persuasive" is misleading. The *Rhetoric* was composed (I.1) to counteract just such a position advanced by the First Sophistic. Moreover the Aristotelian concept of rhetoric as rhetoric is given in 1355a where we learn that its first and foremost function is the promotion of truth; and it is this thought which dominates and specifies the whole three books.

WILLIAM M. A. GRIMALDI

PREFACES TO INQUIRY

William Richard Gondin

King's Crown Press, New York, 1941, pp. 220, \$2.00

This paper-bound volume is an example of the purpose of King's Crown Press, a division of Columbia University Press, "of making certain scholarly material available at minimum cost." It is indeed a scholarly study suggested by the frequent appearance in modern philosophical writings of prolegomena to inquiry and by prevailing interest in the theory of knowledge. Beginning with Francis Bacon and Descartes there has been a growing concern with analysis of the knowing process, with a view to establishing human knowledge more firmly and eliminating waste energy in the pursuit of knowledge. Of late the tendency has been to belittle these efforts as useless, impossible, and even contradictory in their basic principles. The purpose of the present study is to show that the pioneering efforts along this line have been misunderstood to a great extent and that both they and more modern developments of the theme, if handled properly, can be pertinent and useful in the development of philosophical and scientific thought.

The main portion of the book is given to an analysis of the "epistemological" writings of Francis Bacon, Descartes,

VOLUME XIX

INDEX

NOV. 1941 - MAY 1942

ARTICLES

CAUSALITY AND EVOLUTION, by George P. Klubertanz	11
CAUSALITY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE, by George P. Klubertanz	29
EDUCATION FOR PROGRESS, by James A. McWilliams	27
"ERROR OF ARISTOTLE," by John F. McCormick	51
GOD AND PHILOSOPHY: A Review, by Henri J. Renard	15
HEGELIAN DIALECTIC AND POST-KANTIAN IDEALISM, by Vernon J. Bourke	66
OF HISTORY AS A CALCULUS WHOSE TERM IS SCIENCE, by Bernard J. Muller-Thym	41 & 73
KANTIANISM: FAITH VERSUS KNOWLEDGE, by Edmund H. Ziegelmeyer	61
MARKISM: THE BIRTH OF A PREJUDICE, by Charles J. McFadden	70
MATTER AS A PRINCIPLE OF BEING, by William A. Van Roo	47
NOTION OF HUMAN LIBERTY IN SUAREZ, THE, by William N. Clarke	32
PLATO'S CONCEPT OF THE PHILOSOPHIC LIFE, by Raymond V. Schoder	2
PROLOGUE TO EVOLUTION, by Edward T. Foote	7
PROVINCE OF RHETORIC AND POETIC, THE, by Walter J. Ong	24
STUDENT AT THE CROSSROADS, THE, by Christian L. Bonnet	22
WORLD PEACE AND BENEDICT XV, by Patrick J. Holloran	56

CONTRIBUTORS

Bonnet, Christian L., THE STUDENT AT THE CROSSROADS	22
Bourke, Vernon J., HEGELIAN DIALECTIC AND POST-KANTIAN IDEALISM	66
Clarke, William N., THE NOTION OF HUMAN LIBERTY IN SUAREZ	32
Foote, Edward T., PROLOGUE TO EVOLUTION	7
Holloran, Patrick J., WORLD PEACE AND BENEDICT XV	56
Klubertanz, George P., CAUSALITY AND EVOLUTION	11
Klubertanz, George P., CAUSALITY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE	29
McCormick, John F., "THE ERROR OF ARISTOTLE"	51
McFadden, Charles J., MARKISM: THE BIRTH OF A PREJUDICE	70
McWilliams, James A., EDUCATION FOR PROGRESS	27
Muller-Thym, Bernard J., OF HISTORY AS A CALCULUS WHOSE TERM IS SCIENCE	41 & 73
Ong, Walter J., THE PROVINCE OF RHETORIC AND POETIC	24
Renard, Henri J., GOD AND PHILOSOPHY: A REVIEW	15
Schoder, Raymond V., PLATO'S CONCEPT OF THE PHILOSOPHIC LIFE	2
Van Roo, William A., MATTER AS A PRINCIPLE OF BEING	47
Ziegelmeyer, Edmund H., KANTIANISM: FAITH VERSUS KNOWLEDGE	61

BOOKS REVIEWED

A COMPANION TO THE SUMMA, I, THE ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE, Walter Farrell, O.P.	77
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A DIALECTIC OF MORALS, Mortimer J. Adler	57
ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE, Ledger Wood	37
A PHILOSOPHICAL SYMPOSIUM ON AMERICAN CATHOLIC EDUCATION	18
ARISTOTLE'S ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENT, William Barrett	60
A THEORY OF CRITICISM, Sister Mary Gonzaga, O.P.	60
BASIC WORKS OF ARISTOTLE, edited by Richard McKeon	18
BETWEEN PHYSICS AND PHILOSOPHY, Philipp Frank	40
CHRISTIAN CRITICISM OF LIFE, Lynn Harold Hough	57
CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PRINCIPLES, Sister Mary Consilia O'Brien	17
DILEMMA OF SCIENCE, William M. Agar	39
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BACKGROUND, THE, Basil Willey	79
EMANCIPATION OF A FREETHINKER, Herbert Ellsworth Cory	59
FEAR AND TREMBLING, S. Kierkegaard	58
GOD AND PHILOSOPHY, Etienne Gilson	15
INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES, Sister Rose Emmanuella Brennan	60
LIVING THOUGHTS OF ST. PAUL, Jacques Maritain	37
MAN ON HIS NATURE, Sir Charles Sherrington	36
NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN, Reinhold Niebuhr	38
PHILODEMUS: ON METHODS OF INFERENCE, Phillip Howard DeLacy and Estelle Allen DeLacy	79
PHILOSOPHY OF ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD, THE, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp	79
PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, Western Division of C.P.A.	81
PHILOSOPHY FOR OUR TIMES, C. E. M. Joad	39
PLATO'S EARLIER DIALECTIC, Richard Robinson	77
PREFACES TO INQUIRY, William Richard Gondin	80
PRINCEPS CONCORDIAE, PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA AND THE SCHOLASTIC TRADITION, Avery Dulles	17
PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION, edited by Charles A. Hart	17
PROLEGOMENA TO ETHICS, Timothy J. Brosnahan, S.J.	58
PSYCHOLOGY OF ARISTOTLE, THE, Clarence Shute	78
RANSOMING THE TIME, Jacques Maritain	56
REASON AND REVOLUTION, Herbert Marcuse	58
REPETITION, S. Kierkegaard	58
SACRED TREE SCRIPT, Andrew Efron	19
SAINT THOMAS AND ANALOGY, Gerald B. Phelan	36
SICKNESS UNTO DEATH, S. Kierkegaard	58
SPIRIT IN MAN, Rufus M. Jones	19
STAGES ON LIFE'S WAY, S. Kierkegaard	39
SUMMA COSMOLOGIAE, Frederic Saintonge, S.J.	38
SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, Volume I, Saint Thomas Aquinas	77
THEISM AND COSMOLOGY, John Laird	78
THE SOPHIST, Members of the Junior Class at Fordham	18
THIS WAY HAPPINESS, Charles P. Bruehl	18
THOMISTIC PSYCHOLOGY, Robert E. Brennan	16
WRITINGS OF ROBERT GROSSETESTE, THE, S. Harrison Thomas	39

and Locke. Bacon, viewing the rise of the then "new science," makes a plea for better organization in the technology of research. Descartes writes to make mathematical knowledge the norm and foundation of all human knowledge. Locke's purpose is to clear away hampering obstacles to the already developed science by an appeal to the importance of experience. For them the question is not to determine precisely whether man's mind can know at all, which would involve the contradiction of knowing before knowing, but rather to establish the manner and method of knowledge, as a previous training to facilitate inquiry and guard it from going off on a tangent. Their purpose is to indicate the criteria of inquiry, determine who are the proper agents of such inquiry, delimit its context, single out the problems, and interpret the whole question in the light of the criteria established. For Bacon this is technological skill, for Descartes it is mathematical analysis, for Locke it is experience.

Taken in this way these great historical prefaces to inquiry are significant and useful inasmuch as they clarify points of technique in the process of inquiry. The third part of the study calls attention to the modern rapprochement between science and philosophy, criticizes some modern attempts at a theory of inquiry, and indicates lines to be followed and obstacles to be avoided by future undertakings in establishing a theory of knowledge. The main problem of knowledge found in prefaces to inquiry and "the only problem of knowledge with vital epistemological significance" is the "specific, but endlessly complex problem of making better understood man's essential relationship to the world as its inquisitor, interpreter, and knower."

The author's analysis of the three great philosophers is enlightening and challenging, as are his suggestions for future work in the field. It seems, however, that too much priority is generally given to science and practice over thought, so that the problem of "inquiry" takes on the

aspect of a mere method for the advancement of experimental science.

CHRISTIAN L. BONNET

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Proceedings of the Western Division of the
Catholic Philosophical Association
San Francisco, California, 1941, pp. 125, \$0.75

By those who regret the sad deficiencies of modern education, the solid thoughts contained in the modest volume of the Western Division of the Catholic Philosophical Association will be welcomed with delight.

Considering the problem of education according to its *causes*, in the philosophical sense of the term, the papers cover most of the important problems in education. Yet, despite their diversity and comprehensiveness, they form a well-balanced and unified program. And not the least praiseworthy feature of the book is its positive and constructive approach to the questions discussed. Although in a group of addresses of such uniform excellence it would be invidious to single out any one for lengthy examination in this brief review, still I believe that Dr. Adler, who not without justice paddles some Catholic educators, stresses the most crucial factor, when he declares that too frequently we have employed educational means which were adverse to the attainment of the ends we knew to be correct. Or as one of the other speakers expresses it: "Catholic education has long neglected the task of working out a method that is wholly consistent with its philosophy of education and its conception of the child. . . . There are Catholic educators who espouse methods that are far more consistent with the sensism of a materialistic philosophy of education than with the Scholasticism they profess to avow." And the pity of it is that they do not seem to realize it.

JAMES J. CRIBBIN

The printed edition of the Conspectus Cosmologiae by J. A. McWilliams, S. J., will be ready for Fall publication.

